THE FANTASTIC FOUR®

MARVEL MASTERWORKS®

BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

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PRESENTS

THE Fantastic FOUR

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& ANNUAL No. 6

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THE
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INTRODUCTION
BY STAN LEE

I confess it took a lotta nerve for me to name the FF "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine!" back in the early '60s. And now, after rereading these stories, I figure I made a big mistake. I was much too conservative. I should'a called it "The Greatest Comic Magazine in the Whole, Entire Universe—and Points Beyond!"

Of course, I'm prejudiced. Working on these strips with the indescribably talented Jack Kirby was one of the greatest experiences of my life. Especially when our stories were inked by that master embellisher, Joltin' Joe Sinnott.

I can still remember how the ideas just kept popping into our heads as if they had a life of their own. To us, they were more than comic-book stories—they were blockbuster motion pictures just waiting to be filmed. And y'know what? Time has proven that we were right!

But let me give you a hint of the awesome tales that follow as I try to tell you why they mean so much to me. (It just occurs to me—most writers don't do intros telling how great their own stories are. But I hope you'll forgive me because I'm a fan, just like you. The more I reread them, the better I like 'em!)

As everyone knows, one of my all-time favorite heroes is the Silver Surfer. I've always used him, probably more than any of our other characters, to express some of my own thoughts and philosophy. In fact, one of his lines in this book has been quoted more times than I can count. It's when a worried Sue Storm asks the Watcher (another of my favorite characters) what chance Reed has to defeat the all-powerful Silver Surfer and the Watcher replies, "All-powerful? There is only one who deserves that name! And his only weapon is-- love!"

Just between us, I always liked to find some reason for the good guys to fight each other. Even though they don't come any "gooder" than the Silver Surfer, Reed, Ben and Johnny have to risk their lives trying to stop him. And wait'll you see the way Jolly Jack drew their battle in the sky!

Y'know, the reason our mags have always been known as "The Marvel Universe" is because I enjoyed placing all our characters in real locations in the real world so that they would often run into each other. This meant there was always a chance, for instance, of Daredevil coming in contact with the Fantastic Four and a new adventure beginning—and I know you're smart enough to figure out that's what happens in FF #73. It's another new innovation created by Marvel; the case of a story which started in Daredevil's mag being continued in the FF. And just for kicks, we included Spider-Man and Thor as well as ol' Hornhead.

But let me tell you about the longest story Jack and I ever did in a *Fantastic Four* comic book—and about another Marvel "first!" The story is the 48-page "Let There be Life" in *FF Annual #6*, and it's the first comic-book story I know of in which a heroine is pregnant! Not only that, but we'll all be sweating out her pregnancy together until the moment of delivery on the final page. No wonder the loyal legions of fandom have always proclaimed, "Marvel rocks!"

Lots of people told us we were crazy to introduce the theme of a heroine's pregnancy in a fantasy-action strip, but, as usual, lots of people underestimated the intelligence of our readers, readers who have always enjoyed the fact that we managed to combine far-out fantasy with believable, empathetic realism.

And who but Marvel would have given you a villain like Annihilus, or a battle deep within the deadly Negative Zone, not to mention an actual, double-spread photograph of the Zone itself, just in case you thought we were just making it up.

Older readers with great memories still chew my ear off about that unforgettable Annual. They love to point out all the new and innovative gizmos, gadgets and way-out weapons that Jack and I (mostly Jack) came up with—things like *anti-matter particles*; an alien *distortion area*; a *cosmic control rod*; a giant *gyro saw*; an all-engulfing *sonic sponge*; an automated, flying *rail plane*; the supremely bestial *Borers*; a planet composed of *negative particles*; a giant, deadly *negato gun*; and, of course, a whole bunch of life-saving *repellor units*. Between you and me, grasshopper, I'll never understand why the Pentagon hasn't hired us to design their latest weaponry.

And how about titles? In case I've never told you, I honestly think the FF had the greatest titles of any comic book—or, why limit them to comic books? The greatest titles of anything anywhere! How can anyone resist titles like these?—"Where Soars the Silver Surfer?," "The Flames of Battle!," "When Calls Galactus?," "Worlds within Worlds!," "Shall Earth Endure?," "The Thing No More!," "This Monster Forever!" and "Let There be Life!"

Speaking of titles, "The Thing No More" and its sequel, "This Monster Forever" are two of my favorite stories. I'm a pushover for sheer melodrama, and when you see how the Thing finally achieves his dream of becoming normal again, and then has to throw it all away in order to—aw, it isn't right for me to spoil the surprises ahead, but I've got a hunch those yarns'll really get you where you live.

Naturally, there's a whole additional kaboodle of excitement in store for you on the pages ahead. I mean, hey, we haven't even mentioned the awesome menace of Galactus. And if you think you know The Punisher, wait'll you see the first time a Punisher appeared in a Marvel mag. We guarantee it's not the ex-cop you've learned to know and love!

Well, it's time for me to clam up now and let you dive into the thrills that are waiting on the pages ahead. But I can't letcha go without an extra word of praise for the greatest, most imaginative, most dramatic, most creative comic book artist I've ever known or had the privilege to work with. I gave him the nickname "King" many years ago as a gag, 'cause it sounded good with his last name. But, if ever a man deserved that name, that man is the undisputed genius of the comic-book world, Jack "King" Kirby.

We'll never see his like again!

EXCELSIOR!

2005

THE BEGINNING!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

WHERE SOARS THE SILVER SURFER!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

12¢ IND. | 72 MAR

THE FABULOUS F.F. MUST TAKE TO THE SKIES ONCE MORE...

WHERE SOARS THE SILVER SURFER!

I NEVER THOUGHT OL' *STRETCHO* WOULD REALLY *DROP OUT!*

I USEDTA *COMPLAIN* ABOUT HIM ALWAYS TAKIN' OVER---BUT NOW, *WITHOUT* 'IM, WHAT'RE WE GONNA *DO?*

NOT ONLY IS *REED RICHARDS* GONE---BUT HE HAS TAKEN HIS *WIFE* WITH HIM!

YEAH! NO *INVISIBLE GIRL* IN THE TEAM NO MORE!

WE CAN'T *BLAME* REED!

HE *HAS* TO LOOK AFTER SUE---UNTIL SHE HAS HER *BABY!*

BUT NOW--- WHAT ABOUT *US?*

DON'T WORRY, JOHNNY! YOUR PROBLEM WILL SOON BE SOLVED! AND WAIT'LL YOU SEE HOW!

THE LATEST---THE GREATEST---
STAN (THE MAN) and JACK (KING)
LEE KIRBY
POWERHOUSE PRESENTATION!

INKED BY: JOE SINNOTT | LETTERED BY: SAM ROSEN

ACCLAIMED BY: *CULTURE-LOVERS EVERYWHERE!*

PERHAPS WE SHOULD ALL TAKE A NICE *VACATION!*

...SOMEPLACE LIKE *FLORIDA*... OR *BERMUDA!*

WE *CAN'T* LEAVE NOW, CRYS! NOT WITH REED AND SUE GONE!

IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN *EVER* FOR US TO STAY AND CARRY ON!

YEAH! CAN'TCHA JUST *SEE* ME IN A BEACH CHAIR AT THE *FONTAINEBLEU?!*

I'D *CLEAR OUT* THE BLASTED BEACH FASTER THAN A HOWLIN' *HURRICANE!*

BUT... YOU HAVE YOUR *OWN* LIVES TO LEAD, TOO!

I *KNOW* IT, HONEY!

DON'T *TEMPT* ME, GIRL!

NUTS!! NUTHIN' BUT *TALK, TALK, TALK!*

WHAT'S A CLOBBERIN' KID LIKE *ME* DOIN' IN A NOWHERE PLACE LIKE *THIS?*

WHY DON'T YOU CALL *ALICIA*, BEN?

DON'T *RUSH* ME, KID... DON'T *RUSH*, ME!

DIDJA EVER STOP TO THINK WHAT *HAPPENS* WHEN I CALL HER?

BUT THAT'S A CHANCE *ANY* FELLA TAKES..!

I'M ALWAYS SCARED SHE'LL SAY SHE'S AWREDDY *GOT* A DATE!!

BUT ANYONE *ELSE* AIN'T--- THE *THING!*

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO ME WHEN SHE *FINDS* HERSELF ANOTHER JOE?

HOLD IT, BEN! WHAT'S *THIS..?*

JOHNNY! LOOK..!

CAN YA PICTURE *ME* COMPETIN' WITH SOME JOKER WHO AIN'T A REFUGEE FROM A MIDNIGHT *MONSTER SHOW?!!*

YOU MUST ALL *FORGET* YOUR PETTY PROBLEMS!

BY MEANS OF A *DIMENSION WARP,* I HAVE COME TO *WARN* YOU --- OF TERRIBLE *DANGER!!*

SOMEONE'S POPPIN' UP--- OUTTA *NOWHERE!!*

SURELY YOU REMEMBER... THE *WATCHER!*

THOUGH I AM PLEDGED NEVER TO MEDDLE IN THE AFFAIRS OF OTHER PLANETS---THERE IS SOMETHING YOU *MUST KNOW!*

THE SUPREMELY-POWERFUL *SILVER SURFER* IS ABOUT TO ATTACK *ALL OF MANKIND!!*

THE *SURFER!!*

BUT...HE'S PRACTICALLY... *INVINCIBLE!!*

BUCKLE YER *SEAT BELTS*, KIDDIES!

HERE WE GO *AGAIN!*

BUT YOU *CAN'T* BATTLE SO *MIGHTY* A FOE---

WHEN YOU HAVE LOST *HALF* OF YOUR TEAM!

AND, SPEAKING OF THE OTHER HALF OF THE WORLD-FAMED *FANTASTIC FOUR*...LET'S VISIT A CALIFORNIA-BOUND TRANSCONTINENTAL EXPRESS...

HOW WILL THE *OTHERS* GET ALONG *WITHOUT* US, DARLING?

I *TOLD* YOU NOT EVEN TO *THINK* OF THAT, SUE!

ALL THAT MATTERS NOW IS *YOUR* WELFARE--- AND THAT OF---THE *BABY!*

DON'T FORGET, HONEY... *BEN GRIMM* IS ONE OF THE MOST *POWERFUL* OF ALL LIVING BEINGS!

AND THE *HUMAN TORCH* ISN'T EXACTLY LACKING IN SUPER-POWER *HIMSELF!*

BUT, SO LONG AS WE'RE AWAITING THE BABY, IT'S *YOU* WHO ARE THE MOST *VULNERABLE!*

WE'VE GOT TO BE *CERTAIN* THAT NO DEADLY ARCH-ENEMY TRIES TO *STRIKE* AT US... BY MENACING MY *WIFE!*

NOW LET'S FORGET ABOUT SUCH SORDID THINGS---AND START ENJOYING THE *SCENERY!*

NO NEED TO TELL HER THAT *I'M* AS CONCERNED ABOUT BEN AND JOHNNY AS *SHE* IS!

DESPITE THEIR *STRENGTH*, WE'VE ALWAYS FOUGHT AS A *TEAM*...THE *FOUR* OF US!

BUT *NOW*...IF ANY *NEW* MENACE SHOULD ARISE---!

I *KNOW* HE'S ONLY TRYING TO KEEP MY *SPIRITS* UP---!

BUT, I MUSTN'T *UPSET* HIM---

HE'S SACRIFICED SO *MUCH* FOR ALL OF US ALREADY!

JOHNNY IS *YOUNG*, DEAREST--- WITH HIS WHOLE LIFE *AHEAD* OF HIM---

WHILE BEN, THAT SOFT-HEARTED CURMUDGEON, IS VIRTUALLY *INDESTRUCTIBLE!*

IT'S *YOU* I MUST THINK OF NOW---*YOU* WHO MUST BE PROTECTED!

YOU... AND THE *BABY* THAT WILL SOON BE *OURS!*

OKAY, FRANTIC ONES...SOAP OPERA TIME'S *OVER!* NOW, BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES...'CAUSE *WE'RE OFF...!*

WHEREVER I TRAVEL, O'ER THE FACE OF THIS BATTLE-SCARRED PLANET...

I FIND EVER-INCREASING EXAMPLES OF MAN'S *INHUMANITY* TO HIS FELLOW MAN!

HERE, ON THE FAIREST OF ALL WORLDS---HERE, WHERE MORTALS COULD CREATE A LIVING *UTOPIA*---

THE VERY *AIR* I BREATHE SEEMS TAINTED WITH THE ARID STENCH OF *BIGOTRY, HATRED, GREED,* AND *OPPRESSION!*

BUT, IF MEN REFUSE TO TURN AWAY FROM WANTON, UNTHINKING *SAVAGERY*...

--THEN SHALL THE *SILVER SURFER* SHOW THEM THE *FATE* THAT MUST BE *THEIRS!*

THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE THEM *CEASE* THEIR CONSTANT WARRING IS TO PROVIDE FOR THEM A *COMMON FOE!*

LET THEM *UNITE*... TO BATTLE *ME*... THE *ULTIMATE* ENEMY!

NO NATION-- NO CONTINENT-- SHALL BE *SPARED* THE ATTACK OF THE *SILVER SURFER!*

FOR, MY *COSMIC POWER*-CAN ACCOMPLISH *ANYTHING!!*

IT CAN CAUSE *VEGETATION* TO GROW MADLY... WILDLY...

SNARLING VILLAGES, TOWNS, AND CITIES!

I CAN CAUSE THE *SEAS* THEMSELVES TO RISE IN MOUNTAINOUS *FURY*...

TILL NONE WHO LIVE WILL *DARE* TO SAIL THEM!!

NOT EVEN THE ETERNAL *PYRAMIDS* WILL ESCAPE MY *DE-GRAVITY* THRUST!!

IT WILL TAKE *TIME*... MUCH TIME... BEFORE MANKIND WILL *UNITE* TO OPPOSE ME...!

BUT, *TIME* HAS LITTLE MEANING TO AN EXILE FROM THE *STARS!*

NOW *HERE*, OVER THE CONCRETE VASTNESS OF *NEW YORK*, I SHALL BEGIN A *SONIC SKY DIVE!*

AND, WHEN I AM *DONE*, THE WORLD WILL KNOW AT LAST THAT WITHOUT *LOVE*, WITHOUT *BROTHERHOOD*, THERE CAN ONLY BE *TURMOIL*... AND FINAL *DESTRUCTION!*

AND NOW...

LET THE LESSON BEGIN!!

EXACTLY ONE MICROSECOND LATER (IN CASE YOU'D LIKE TO SET YOUR WATCH), THE SONIC SHOCK WAVES STRIKE THE TOWERING BAXTER BUILDING ITSELF--- AND WE SEE---

HEY!! WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!!

SOMETHING--- JUST BROKE--- THE SOUND BARRIER!

IT IS AS I FEARED..!

THE SILVER SURFER HAS COME!

AND NOW--- IT IS UP TO YOU!

THE SILVER SURFER IS LIKE A CHILD, PLAYING WITH FORCES HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND!

THOUGH HIS MOTIVES ARE PRAISEWORTHY--- THE DANGER IS TOO GREAT!

EXTREMISM--- SUCH AS HIS---MAY YET HURL YOUR RACE INTO THE MAELSTROM OF TOTAL EXTINCTION!

HEY! THE WATCHER VANISHED!

WHERE'D HE GO?

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW!

FLAME ON!

JOHNNY... WAIT!! YOU HAVEN'T A CHANCE AGAINST THE SILVER SURFER!

CAN'T LET THAT STOP ME, CRYS---!

NOBODY HAS!

BLAST IT!! HOW'M I SUPPOSEDTA GO AFTER A GUY WHO FLIES?!!

I GOTTA GET AHOLD OF OUR JET CYCLE... AND FAST!

THERE HE IS!!

I'LL SEE IF A BOLT OF MY NITRO-FLAME CAN STOP HIM!

THE HUMAN TORCH--- ATTACKING ME!!

HAVE YOU SO SOON FORGOTTEN THE SCOPE OF MY SKY-BORN POWER?

NUTS! I DIDN'T EVEN SLOW 'IM DOWN!

THOUGH I HAVE NO WISH TO CAUSE PHYSICAL INJURY TO ANY WHO OPPOSE ME---

NOTHING... NO ONE... SHALL DETER ME FROM MY MISSION!

THEREFORE, BY SIMPLY CONTRACTING THE MOLECULES IN FRONT OF HIM---

I CREATE A FLOATING WALL TO STOP HIS BLAZING FLIGHT!

THOUGH HE MANAGED TO BURN HIS WAY *THRU*...

IT *WEAKENED* HIM---AS I KNEW IT *MUST!*

AND NOW---I SHALL QUICKLY *COUNTERATTACK!*..

...EMPLOYING HIS *OWN* MIGHTY WEAPON *AGAINST* HIM!

THEN, MOVING AT A SPEED WHICH THE FLAMING YOUTH CANNOT EVEN *HOPE* TO MATCH, THE *SILVER SURFER* MAKES AN INCREDIBLE TRAP OF COSMIC *TORCHES* ATOP THE SURROUNDING SKYSCRAPERS ---!

HE'S---HEMMING ME *IN*---

WITH TOWERS OF...*COSMIC FORCE!!*

THEY'RE GROWING IN INTENSITY---CLOSING *IN* ON ME!

THE ENERGY IS *BLINDING*... *DAZZLING*...

I--DON'T KNOW ---WHICH WAY TO *TURN*--!!

BUT, SUDDENLY---

OKAY, CHARLIE...

NOW LET'S SEE HOW YA DO AGAINST SOMEONE YER OWN *SIZE!!*

AND, BEFORE THE STARTLED *SURFER* CAN MAKE ANOTHER MOVE---

I GOTTA PUT 'IM OUTTA ACTION *FAST*...

BEFORE HE CAN TOSS ONE OF THEM CRUMMY *BOLTS* AT ME!

HOLD STILL, BLAST YA!!

A FELLA CAN GIT *AIR SICK* THE WAY YER WIGGLIN' AROUND UP HERE!

BUT, BEFORE THE ORANGE-SKINNED HUMAN *POWERHOUSE* CAN LAND A TELLING BLOW, HIS STAR-SPAWNED OPPONENT JABS HIM WITH A PAIR OF TWIN, STINGING *ENERGY WAVES*..!

THE SILVER SURFER IS *NOT* SO EASILY *BESTED!*

NOR DOES *YOUR* BESTIAL STRENGTH IMPRESS ONE WHO HAS BEEN HERALD TO--- *GALACTUS!*

FOR, I *TOO* POSSESS *MIGHT* BEYOND MEASURE!

=UNHHH!=

IN THE TIME I HAVE SPENT UPON THIS PLANET OF *MADNESS*...

I HAVE LEARNED TO BATTLE AS *HUMANS* BATTLE!!

AND NOW, AS A TOKEN OF MY *RESPECT* FOR YOUR VALOR--- I SHALL PLACE YOU SAFELY UPON THE GROUND BELOW!

OKAY, BIG MAN.. BUT, BEFORE YA *DO*...

HERE'S A LITTLE *FERGET-ME-NOT* FROM *ME* TO *YOU*..!!

I GOTTA KEEP *POUNDIN'* AWAY!!---I *GOTTA*!

IT'S--- NO USE!

I GAVE 'IM---ALL I *GOT*... BUT---HE'S STILL *STANDIN'*!!

LIKE *ALL* EARTH-LINGS, YOU STILL THINK ONLY *MIGHT* CAN PREVAIL!

BUT, YOU FORGET *ONE* UNIVERSAL FACT..!

NO MATTER *HOW* POWERFUL ONE MAY BE ---

SOMEWHERE--- SOMEHOW --- THERE IS ALWAYS *SOMEONE* WHO IS HIS *MASTER!*

AND NOW... I HAVE *TIRED* OF THIS GAME!!

AT THAT MOMENT, ON THE SPEEDING TRANSCONTINENTAL EXPRESS ---

BILL! UP AHEAD!!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN IS *THAT?*

IT LOOKS LIKE A--- A---

NO! IT *CAN'T* BE! IT ISN'T *POSSIBLE!*

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IT *IS!* IT'S SOME KINDA *MAN*--- STANDING ON THE *TRACKS*--- RIGHT *AHEAD* OF US!

BUT... LOOK AT THE *SIZE* OF HIM!!

WE'RE GONNA *HIT* 'IM! WE'LL NEVER *STOP* IN TIME!!

NO!! HE JUST... *WAVED HIS HAND*... AND *LOOK...!*

WE *STOPPED*... WITHOUT EVEN A *LURCH*---

LIKE FLOATING ON A *CLOUD!!*

DO NOT FEAR! I MEAN *NO* HARM!

THERE ARE TWO *PASSENGERS* UPON YOUR MULTI-WHEELED CONVEYANCE...

I WISH TO *SPEAK* TO THEM--- AT *ONCE!*

SUE! HE MEANS US!

WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED... IMPORTANT ENOUGH---TO BRING THE WATCHER HERE??

MY EXPLANATION SHALL BE BRIEF...

FOR, EVERY MOMENT IS VITAL!

THE SILVER SURFER---UNMINDFUL OF THE DREAD CONSEQUENCES ... NOW RUNS AMOK AMONGST MANKIND!

THOUGH I AM FORBIDDEN TO ENTER THE FRAY---

SAY NO MORE!!

I KNOW WHAT MUST BE DONE!

NO, REED! NOT--- YOU!!

CAN'T YOU SEE? I MUST GO! IT WILL TAKE ALL OUR POWER..

THEN I'LL GO, TOO!

NO!! I FORBID IT!

THE DECISION IS MADE!!

SO SHALL IT STAND!

HE'S---TRANSPORTING ME---TO THE SCENE---! WAIT FOR ME---MY DARLING---!

REED! I'LL WAIT--- FOREVER!!

BUT WHAT...CAN HE DO---AGAINST THE ALL-POWERFUL SILVER SURFER??

ALL-POWERFUL? THERE IS ONLY ONE WHO DESERVES THAT NAME!

AND HIS ONLY WEAPON--- IS LOVE!

BUT, LOVE IS THE LAST THING ON ANYONE'S MIND AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT! AND, IF YOU THINK WE'RE KIDDING ---

WHAT'S THAT?? ORDERS FROM THE PENTAGON?!

WE'RE TO USE THE SONIC SHARK* AGAINST THE SURFER?

YOU BET! SHE'S FULLY-OPERATIONAL NOW!

CLEAR THE AREA... ON THE DOUBLE!

* SONIC SHARK: AN EXPERIMENTAL MISSILE WHICH HARNESSES AND UNLEASHES THE POWER OF COSMIC ENERGY!! --- PSEUDO-SCIENTIFIC STAN.

GENERAL!! BY YOUR LEAVE, SIR.. THE SONIC SHARK IS STILL UNTESTED!

WITH ALL ITS POWER... IF SOMETHING SHOULD GO WRONG..!!

IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT MIGHT STOP THE SURFER!!

YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS, CAPTAIN! CARRY THEM OUT!!

YES, SIR!

BEGIN THE COUNT-DOWN!!

NO MATTER WHERE THE SURFER IS---

OUR BIRD'LL FIND HIM--- AND BRING 'IM DOWN!

AND, SPEAKING OF THE MOST FABULOUSLY FASCINATING CHARACTER IN MODERN ADVENTUREDOM ---

I HAVE CHOSEN A DESPERATE MEASURE TO BRING MANKIND TO ITS SENSES ---!

FOR, IN TRUTH, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY!

SO ANXIOUS IS HE TO REACH OUR NATION'S CAPITOL, THAT HE BLASTS A PATH THRU ANYTHING THAT STANDS IN HIS WAY--- EVEN IF IT HAPPENS TO BE A MOUNTAIN PEAK--!

BUT, WE SEEM TO HAVE *FORGOTTEN* SOMETHING! OH, YES... THAT'S RIGHT... *REED RICHARDS*...

HE *DID* IT!

THE WATCHER *TELEPORTED* ME BACK TO THE ROOF OF A MIDTOWN BUILDING!!

BUT, WHO IS--*OH!* *JOHNNY!*

WHAT *IS* IT, BOY? WHAT *HAPPENED??*

OHHH--- MY *HEAD!*

IT WAS THE *SILVER SURFER!!* HE *PULVERIZED* ME WITH SOME *COSMIC BOLTS!*

BUT... *REED!* WAIT A MINUTE! HOW'D YOU GET *BACK* HERE?

THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT, LAD!

WHAT I HAVE TO *KNOW* IS... *WHERE'S THE SURFER NOW??*

I'M NOT *SURE!* I *LOST* HIM!

BUT... WHAT HAPPENED TO *BEN??*

HE WAS RIGHT *WITH* ME!

THERE'S ONLY *ONE* WAY TO FIND OUT---

WE'VE GOT TO FIND THE *SURFER!*

LUCKILY, WE'RE ONLY A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM OUR BAXTER BUILDING *HEADQUARTERS!*

SO *FLAME ON,* PARTNER!

THWIP!

---AND *AWAAAAAAY* WE GO!!

MINUTES LATER, IN THE MAGNIFICENTLY EQUIPPED LAB OF *MR. FANTASTIC*...

THERE HE *IS*, REED!

YOU TRACKED HIM DOWN WITH YOUR *SCANNER!*

IT LOOKS *BAD*, JOHNNY..!

HE'S HEADING TOWARDS THE *CAPITOL!*

WHAT'S WRONG WITH *THAT?*

OUR *SONIC SHARK MISSILE* IS BASED IN THE AREA--- *THAT'LL* STOP HIM!

IT'LL DO *MORE* THAN STOP HIM--!

IT HAS THE POWER TO *KILL* HIM!

HE WON'T HAVE A *CHANCE!*

WE'VE GOT TO CONTACT THE *THING!*

IF HE'S ANYWHERE AROUND, I'LL *FIND* HIM!

NO! THIS *FLARE* WILL DO THE TRICK!

YOU PREPARE THE *POGO PLANE* FOR INSTANT FLIGHT!

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IT *WORKED!* THERE'S BEN'S ANSWERING SIGNAL--- ACROSS TOWN!

NOW, IF HE'LL JUST STAY WHERE HE *IS!*

SOMEONE BETTER *GIT* HERE PRETTY *FAST!*

THE BLAMED *JET-CYCLE'S* TOO BANGED-UP FROM THE CRASH--- I CAN'T *USE* IT!

BUT WHO IN BLAZES FIRED THAT *FLARE??*

WUZ IT THE *KID?*

THE *POGO PLANE'S* TAKIN' OFF!

JUNIOR WOULDN'TA *BOTHERED*... HE'D USE HIS *FLAME!*

THAT MEANS..OL' *STRETCHO'S* BACK!

HE MUST BE IN ONE BIG *HURRY!*

HE'S FIXIN' TA *GRAB* ME WITH THAT NUTTY *SKY HOOK..!*

HANG ON, BEN! WE'VE NO TIME TO SLOW DOWN!

YEAH! YEAH! I KINDA *NOTICED!*

DIDJA FIND THE *SURF.. HEY!*

HOLD IT! WHERE'S THE *TORCH??*

HE FLEW ON *AHEAD...* TO SAVE *TIME!*

NOW *SIT TIGHT...* I'M SHIFTING TO *ROCKET SPEED!*

BUT, EVEN AS REED RICHARDS *SPEAKS...*

THE DEADLY SONIC SHARK IS *LAUNCHED!!*

AND, AS IT UNERRINGLY HOMES IN ON ITS SPEEDING, STREAKING, SKY-RIDING VICTIM...

THE *SURFER'S* JUST AHEAD!!

I'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING... *NOW!!*

HE'S NOT EVEN *AWARE* OF THE MISSILE!

IF I CAN JAR HIM WITH A BOLT OF *FLAME*, IT'LL--- *THAT'S IT!*

HE SPUN *AROUND!* HE *SEES* IT!

BUT, IT'S *TOO FAST* FOR HIM...!

HE CAN'T *OUT-DISTANCE* IT!

AND IF HE TRIES TO *DESTROY* IT---

IT'LL *FINISH* HIM!

THERE'S ONLY *ONE* CHANCE...!

IF I CAN DISABLE THE *ENGINE*...WITHOUT CAUSING A *COSMIC FEED-BACK!*

I...I *FAILED!!*

UNHHH!

IT'S *IMPERVIOUS*.. TO HEAT...!

IT CONTAINS--- ITS *OWN* DEFENSES!!

NOW IT'S FIRING AN *ENERGY DRAINER* AT THE SURFER!

HE'LL GET *WEAKER*.. AND *WEAKER*.. UNTIL---!

THAT *NOISE!* IT'S..

THE *POGO PLANE!*

IT'S *REED*... AND *BEN*!!

BUT...WHAT CAN THEY *DO*?

WHAT *NOW*, BIG BRAIN??

THIS FLYIN' *KIDDIE CAR* AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' ABOARD CAN STOP *THAT* GIZMO!

NEGATIVE, BENJAMIN!!

WE'VE *ONE* WEAPON THAT'S NEVER FAILED *US YET*...

YOUR OWN NATURAL *STRENGTH*!!

YER PUTTIN' *ME ON*, MISTER!

THEN, SCANT SECONDS LATER---

Y'MEAN---I'M JUST SUPPOSED TA *BELT* IT ONE??

BUT... IT'S SET TA *EXPLODE*..

ANY SECOND!

RIGHT! YOU HAVE TO MAKE IT SWERVE *OFF-COURSE!*

THAT'S THE CHANCE WE *TAKE*!!

DON'T MISS... THIS IS *IT*!!

YOU DID IT!

IT EXPLODED *HARM-LESSLY!*

YOU DROVE IT INTO THE *STRATOSPHERE* BEFORE IT COULD *RIGHT* ITSELF!

THE SURFER IS *SAFE!*

THE SURFER'S *LANDING!*

BUT... HE LOOKS *HURT!*

FLAME OFF, JOHNNY! *STAY BACK!*

WAIT FOR *US!*

YOU NEED HAVE--NO FURTHER *FEAR*... OF THE *SILVER SURFER!*

ONCE AGAIN... I HAVE *UNDERESTIMATED*... THE AWESOME CREATIONS OF *MAN!!*

BEFORE THE WEAPON *EXPLODED*... IT *WEAKENED* ME...

IT HAS... ALMOST TOTALLY *DRAINED* ME--OF MY *COSMIC POWER!*

THUS, I STAND BEFORE YOU... NO LONGER *INVINCIBLE*...

NO LONGER *MAD* ENOUGH TO FEEL THAT *ONE BEING ALONE* COULD BRING *SANITY* TO THE HUMAN RACE!

THEN, SOMEHOW, IT WAS ALL... *WORTH-WHILE!*

YOU SURE GOTTA LEARN THINGS THE *HARD WAY!*

ONCE AGAIN, THE *SILVER SURFER* IS IN YOUR *DEBT!*

YOU OWE US *NOTHING!*

JUST REMEMBER-- MANKIND IS *NOT* AS LOST... *NOT* AS HOPELESS... AS IT MAY SEEM!

YOU SHALL NOT FIND ME *UNGRATE-FUL!*

TRULY, THERE IS A SPARK OF *DIVINITY* IN ALL WHO *LIVE*, AND *THINK*... AND *STRIVE!*

A SPARK THAT WILL ONE DAY *IGNITE*...

--AND *ILLUMINATE* THE UNIVERSE!!

=*SHEEESH!*= BILLY GRAHAM'S GOT NOTHIN' ON *YOU!*

WELL, HE'S *GONE* AGAIN!

YOU JUST CAN'T *HOLD* A GENT LIKE THAT!

AND I'M KINDA *GLAD* OF IT!

HEY! WITHOUT HIS *COSMIC POWER*, HE'S LIKE *ANY* JOE... ON A FLYIN' SURFBOARD!

HE'LL *NEVER* BE --LIKE ANY JOE!

IN ALL THE UNIVERSE-- THERE'LL NEVER BE ANOTHER LIKE--THE *SILVER SURFER!*

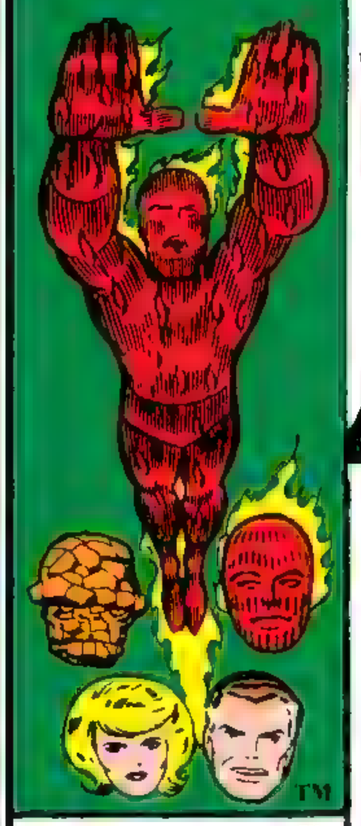
--EXCEPT FOR NEXT ISSUE'S SENSATIONAL GUESTS, **SPIDEY, THOR, and DAREDEVIL!**

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GIANT GUEST STAR BONANZA!



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MCG

IN WHICH THE FABULOUS F.F. MAKE THEIR DEADLIEST MISTAKE

"THE FLAMES OF BATTLE..."

PAY ATTENTION, PILGRIM--THIS IS *IMPORTANT*--!

IN *DAREDEVIL* #38 (NOW ON SALE), WE SAW *DD* FREE HIMSELF FROM THE PHYSICAL FORM OF *DR. DOOM!* GOT IT? OKAY!

BUT *NOW*, THE DEMONIAC *DOC* HAS TRICKED THE *FF* INTO BELIEVING THAT *DOOM* IS ABOUT TO *ATTACK* THEM--*STILL* IN THE FORM OF *DAREDEVIL!*

TAKE YOUR *POST*, TORCH!

SOUND THE *ALARM* AS SOON AS YOU *SIGHT* HIM!

I HOPE I CAN GIT MY *PAWS* ON 'IM BEFORE YA BELT 'IM WITH THAT SOUPED-UP *POP-GUN!*

LET MARVELDOM CHEER! LET HUMANITY SHOUT!

STAN (THE MAN) LEE and JACK (KING) KIRBY

HAVE BESTOWED ANOTHER MASTERPIECE UPON MANKIND!

EXOTICALLY EMBELLISHED BY: **JOE SINNOTT**

LACONICALLY LETTERED BY: **ARTIE SIMEK**

WITH DOOM ABOUT TO STRIKE, I'M GLAD THERE WAS TIME TO GET SUE SAFELY OUT OF TOWN!
YOU WON'T HAVETA WORRY ABOUT THAT CREEP--
NOT IF HE GITS WITHIN CLOBBERIN' DISTANCE!
4
ANYWAY, HOW CAN YA BE SURE THAT OL' HORNHEAD IS REALLY DOOM?
BECAUSE THE REAL DAREDEVIL CALLED TO WARN US!
I SEE HIM-- JUST AHEAD!
BUT HOW D'YA KNOW IT WUZ THE REAL DD?
DON'T YOU REMEM-BER--?
WE CHECKED HIS VOICE AGAINST THE AUDIO RECORD ON ON OUR VOCA-FILE!
AND, AS WE CONCLUDE OUR SNEAKY, SUB-LIMINAL SUMMARY--
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT DOOM IS REALLY GONE!
BUT, I STILL HAVE TO WARN THE FF--
THERE'S ALWAYS THE CHANCE HE MAY TRY THE SAME TRICK AGAIN--
BUT, ONCE I REVEAL HIS SECRET OF BODY TRANSFERRAL TO RICHARDS, HE'LL-- WAIT!!
IT CAN ONLY MEAN-- ONE THING--!
THAT SUDDEN HEAT-- ABOVE ME!
ZASK!
THE TORCH! HE'S ATTACKING!
BUT WHY?
WHY USE HIS FLAME AGAINST ME?!!
2

CAN'T KEEP DODGING HIS *STUN BLASTS* MUCH LONGER!

MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO *TRICK* HIM--!

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE ME *THAT* WAY, DOOM!

SO *THAT'S* IT!

HE STILL THINKS I'M THE *OTHER* DD!

IT *WORKED!*

BY *TWISTING ASIDE,* IN MID-AIR--

I CAUSED HIS OWN *MOMENTUM* TO CARRY HIM RIGHT THRU THE *WATER TOWER* WHICH I SENSED BELOW!

HE'LL REGAIN *CONSCIOUSNESS* AS SOON AS HE DRIES OUT!

BUT, THE *OTHERS* WILL SOON BE *AFTER* ME!

HOW CAN I *CONVINCE* THEM I'M THE *REAL* DD--AND NOT *DR. DOOM?!?*

IF I HAD THE SENSE OF A GOPHER, I'D TAKE OFF!

BUT, I MUST EXPLAIN--THEY HAVE TO BE WARNED--SOMEHOW!

I'M NO MATCH FOR THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPER-TEAM!

SOMEONE JUST SWUNG ONTO THE ROOF! IF IT'S--NO!

IT'S SPIDER-MAN!

AM I TOO LATE FOR THE PARTY?

WHAT GIVES, HORN-HEAD?

IT'S NO PARTY, MISTER!

THE FF THINK I'M DR. DOOM--AND THEY'RE AFTER ME--WITH THE GLOVES OFF!

YOU'RE PUTTING ME ON!

THEY THINK YOU'RE DOOM?

IF YOU THINK IT'S A GAG--

THEN CUT OUT! WHO NEEDS YOU?

YOU REALLY MEAN IT, EH? YOU ARE IN A JAM!

OKAY THEN--YOU CAN COUNT ON YOUR FRIENDLY, NEIGHBOR-HOOD SPIDER-MAN!

THWIP!

BUT, IF WE HAVE TO STAND UP TO THE FF--WE'LL NEED HELP!

HOLD IT! I DIDN'T ASK--!

REEE-LAX, SON!

WHILE I WAS CAVORTING AROUND TOWN, I NOTICED JUST THE JOKER WE NEED!

IF HE'S STILL THERE--WE'LL BE IN BUSINESS!

HE'S JUST GETTING UP!

THE BIG FELLA LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN THRU A WAR!*

WELL, NOTHING LIKE A GOOD FIGHT TO SHAKE HIM OUT OF IT!

* -HIS BATTLE WITH THE WRECKER, IN THOR #150, TO BE EXACT! --STATISTICAL STAN.

HI, GOLDILOCKS! YOU'RE JUST THE THUNDER GOD I'VE BEEN **LOOKING** FOR!

SPIDER-MAN! WHAT BRINGS THEE HENCE?

I WAS **HOPING** YOU'D ASK!

THERE'S **TROUBLE** BREWING BETWEEN THE **FF** AND **DAREDEVIL**, AND--

STILL THY TONGUE! I'LL HEAR **NO MORE** OF IT!

THE POWER OF **THOR** IS NEEDED ELSE-WHERE!

WOW! I NEVER THOUGHT **YOU'D** TURN CHICKEN!

IF THAT DOTH MEAN WHAT I **TAKE** IT TO MEAN--

THOU DAREST ACCUSE THE SON OF ODIN-- OF **COWARDICE??**

YOU FIGURE IT OUT, CURLY!

EVEN AS WE **TALK,** DAREDEVIL'S LIFE IS IN DANGER--FROM THE **FF!**

CAN'T WAIT FOR **SPIDER-MAN** ANY LONGER!

THE **BAXTER BUILDING** IS JUST AHEAD!

MY **RADAR SENSE!!** IT JUST **REACTED** TO SOMETHING! I'D BETTER--**UNN!!**

TOO LATE! I'VE BEEN SNARED--BY **RICHARDS** HIMSELF!

HOW DO I **CONVINCE** THEN I'M THE **REAL** DAREDEVIL??

IF THEY THINK I'M **DR. DOOM** --THEY WON'T GIVE ME A **CHANCE!**

YA **GOT** 'IM, STRETCH!

BUT, WHAT HAPPENED TO **JOHNNY?**

THAT'S WHAT WE'LL SOON FIND OUT!

LEGGO OF HIM, MISTER!

IT DON'T TAKE BRAINS TO HANDLE A CRUMB THAT!

NO, BEN! WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT HE DID TO THE TORCH FIRST!

BEN--STOP!! HOLD IT!

DON'T BE A FOOL, THING!

I'M NOT DR. DOOM!

OH NO?? THEN WHY-- UNNNH!

YER NERVE BLAST RAY!! YA USED IT-- AGAINST-- ME?!!

I WARNED YOU, BEN!

I HAD A FEELING IT WASN'T MY KICK THAT STOPPED HIM!

LOOK, RICHARDS-- USE YOUR HEAD!

IF I WERE DOOM-- WOULD I COME HERE?

OF COURSE YOU WOULD--

IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW THE REAL DAREDEVIL HAD ALREADY WARNED US!

BUT--GIVE ME A CHANCE --I'LL PROVE WHO I AM!

HOW?

HE'S RIGHT!! --HOW??

WE BOTH KNOW DOOM HAD A BODY TRANSFERRAL RAY--

SO, HOW DO I PROVE HE HASN'T USED IT ON ME?

LET'S SIT DOWN AND TALK ABOUT IT--LIKE CIVILIZED MEN!

FORGET IT, MASKED MAN!

BETWEEN THE TWO OF US WE CAN FIGURE SOMETHING OUT!

IF YOU ARE DR. DOOM-- I WOULDN'T LET MY GUARD DOWN FOR A SECOND!

THEN-- WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO--

--MURDER ME--JUST ON SUSPICION??

THAT DON'T SOUND LIKE A BAD IDEA, FROM WHERE I SIT!

HOLD OFF, BEN! YOUR FULL STRENGTH CAN'T HAVE RETURNED TO YOU SO SOON!

NUTS!! HOW MUCH DO I NEED AGAINST THAT FOULBALL?

I KIND'A HATE TO MESS UP DAREDEVIL'S BODY--SINCE IT DON'T BELONG TO YA--

HAVE TO STRIKE NOW-- WHILE HE'S PARTIALLY STUNNED!

--BUT I'LL APOLOGIZE WHEN I SEE 'IM!

UNNHH!! EVEN AFTER BEING BELTED WITH RICHARDS' NERVE BLASTER--

HE'S STILL A POWERHOUSE!

THE DEMOLO-GUN-- YOU'RE FALLING TOWARDS IT!

RATS!! I TRIPPED OVER STRETCHO'S MILE-LONG LEG!!

LOOK OUT, BEN!

LOOK OUT!

BUT, THE WARNING CRY OF MR. FANTASTIC COMES TOO LATE FOR THE THING TO CHECK HIS FALL, AS--A MICRO-SECOND LATER--

BA-KOW!

THE SHOCK MADE HIM RELEASE ME!

THIS IS MY CHANCE TO ESCAPE--

IF I CAN MANAGE TO LIVE LONG ENOUGH!

THE DEMOLO-GUN!!

SMASH IT, BEN-- SMASH IT!

YOU DID IT!

AND IT WAS JUST IN TIME, OLD FRIEND--

FIRING UNCHECKED, IT MIGHT HAVE DESTROYED THE CITY!

NEVER MIND THE LECTURE!

LET'S GO FIND DOOM!

MEANWHILE--

HEAR THAT BLAST, GOLDEN BOY?

STILL THINK YOU'RE NOT NEEDED AT THE BAXTER BUILDING?

THOUGH OMNIPOTENT ODIN HATH STRIPPED ME OF MY ENCHANTED POWERS--

THOR SHALL BE THINE ALLY!

LET US THEN AWAY!

WELL? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

WHERE'S THE OL' PIZZAZZ?

IT CRACKS ME UP TO WATCH YOU FLY, HOLDING ONTO THAT CRAZY HAMMER!

ALAS, I MAY DO SO--NO LONGER!

WITH MY HAMMER'S POWER DENIED ME-- I AM TRULY EARTH-BOUND AS IS ANY MORTAL!

WELL, HANG LOOSE, BIG FELLA--

NO SENSE WASTING OUR MONEY ON CABS!

I DO NOT RELISH THE PROSPECT OF WAGING BATTLE AGAINST THE INDOMITABLE FANTASTIC FOUR!

THEY HAVE EVER ESPOUSED THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE--AND TRUTH!

I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF SLUGGING IT OUT WITH THEM EITHER!

BUT MOSTLY BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT A BAD HABIT OF NEVER LOSING!

ANY ONE OF THOSE CHARACTERS HAS THE POWER TO HOLD OFF A SMALL ARMY!

EVEN MOISHE DAYAN WOULD THINK TWICE ABOUT TANGLING WITH THEM!

THAT VOICE--SOUNDS LIKE SPIDER-MAN SWINGING OFF TOWARDS OUR HQ!

WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE?

FIRST DOOM ATTACKS US--IN THE GUISE OF DAREDEVIL--

AND NOW--I SEE THE WALL-CRAWLER, AND--THAT'S GOTTA BE THOR WITH HIM--!

WHAT IF--THEY'RE ENEMIES IN DISGUISE, TOO?!!

FLAME ON!

4

DOOM WAS A MASTER AT CREATING LIFELIKE ROBOTS--!

AND IT'S JUST POSSIBLE THAT THOSE TWO ARE HIS LATEST HANDIWORK!

OKAY, PLAYMATES!! YOU'VE GONE FAR ENOUGH!

GET OFF THAT ROOF BEFORE I BLAST YOU OFF!

THY WORDS WERE TRUE!

THE MADNESS IS SURELY UPON HIM!

IN OTHER WORDS, HE HASN'T CHANGED A BIT!

YOU HANDLE THE THING, CURLY--

A FELLA HIS SIZE IS MORE YOUR SPEED!

I'LL KEEP THE TORCH BUSY!

BUT NOT FOR LONG YOU WON'T!

SO BE IT!

STAY THY HANDS!

'TIS THE GOD OF THUNDER WHO DOTH COMMAND THEE!

IT COULD BE ANOTHER OF DOOM'S TRAPS, BEN!

HOLD HIM OFF WHILE I SETTLE WITH THE BOGUS DAREDEVIL!

AT LAST--SOMEONE BIG ENUFF FER ME TO CLOBBER!

AND YET--WHAT IF HE REALLY IS DAREDEVIL?

HOW CAN I EVER KNOW?

THOR--SPIDER-MAN--HERE TO HELP ME!

BUT--AGAINST THE FANTASTIC FOUR--WILL THE TWO OF THEM BE ENOUGH??

I GOTTA HAND IT TO YER BOSS--DOC DOOM!

IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SWEAR YA REALLY ARE OL' GOLDILOCKS!

WHAT?!! THOU DOST TAKE ME FOR A BASE IMPOSTOR?!!

TRULY, THERE BE MADNESS UNBRIDLED AMONGST YE MORTALS!

WATCH YER LANGWICH, CORNBALL!!

THERE MAY BE SOME CHICKS AROUND!

HUH? HOW'DJA DODGE THAT HAY-MAKER?

THINK YOU THE THUNDER GOD BE NOT SWIFT OF EYE AND FLEET OF LIMB?

FOR ASGARD-- AND HONOR IMPERIAL!!

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME-- RIGHT BACK ATCHA!

HAH! I DID IT!! I FLOORED OL' GOLDILOCKS HIMSELF!

BUT, I THOUGHT HIS HAMMER WUZ ENCHANTED!

I JUST REMEMBER --HE SAID HE LOST HIS POWERS!

NUTS! IT'S LIKE HIM BEATIN' PLAIN BEN GRIMM!

HEY! YER STILL AWAKE!

--TRYIN' TO GIT UP!

EVEN WITHOUT YER POWERS-- YOU AINT NO PANTY-WAIST!

EVEN WITHOUT MY POWERS-- STILL AM I THOR--

--SON OF ODIN--WARRIOR OF ASGARD--IMMORTAL BORN!!

OKAY! OKAY! YA WANT I SHOULD COURTSY--OR BOW??

LOOK OUT WITH THAT HAMMER--!

--YER LIABLE TO GIMME A CHARLEY HORSE!

AND, JUST OUTSIDE THE WINDOW--WE FIND--

HOLD IT, WEBHEAD!

YOU'RE NOT GOING ANY-WHERE!

ZIZZT!

DOESN'T THAT HOTHEAD EVER MISS?

NO MATTER HOW MANY NUTTY WEBS YOU SHOOT--

I'VE FLAME ENOUGH TO SIZZLE ALL OF THEM!

THWIP!

FORGIVE ME FOR NOT APPLAUDING--

BUT I'M KINDA BUSY RIGHT NOW!

I FIGURED YOU'D TRY TO LOSE ME AROUND THAT CORNER!

YOU DISAPPOINT ME, WALL-CRAWLER--

DO YOU THINK YOU'RE PLAYING WITH AMATEURS?

ANSWER ME WHEN I TALK TO YOU!!

--OR CAN YOU ONLY TALK WHEN DOOM PULLS THE STRINGS?

HE LANDED ON THE ROOF OF A CHEMICAL PLANT!

GOTTA REACH HIM, BEFORE HE CAN--

-UH OH!!-

I CAN'T STOP IN TIME--!

THOSE FUMES-- FROM THE CHIMNEY--

WHEN MY FLAME HITS THEM, THEY'LL--

-UNNHH!!-

BUT, WHAT OF THE *LEADER* OF THE FAR-FAMED *FF*--??

HIS *REFLEXES* ARE AS FAST AS THE *REAL* DD!

BUT, I MUSTN'T *WEAKEN*--

I MUSTN'T *DOUBT* MYSELF!

AND YET --WHAT IF I'M *WRONG*--??

UHHH!!

IF NOT FOR MY *PLIABLE* BODY--

THAT WOULD HAVE *FLOORED* ME!

THE *ROOF*--IT'S BEEN *WEAKENED* BY THE EXPLOSION--

IT'S *CAVING IN!*

WE'RE FALLING *THRU*--TO THE *LAB* BELOW!!

I DON'T *WANT* TO DO THIS, RICHARDS--BUT--

SAVE YOUR BREATH, MASKED MAN--

YOU WON'T BE DOING IT MUCH *LONGER!*

I'M *THRU* HANDLING YOU WITH KID GLOVES--!

PERHAPS I *CAN'T* MATCH YOUR UNCANNY *REFLEXES*--OR *ACROBATIC SKILL*--

BUT, I'VE A FEW LITTLE STUNTS OF MY *OWN*--SUCH AS *THIS*--!

BUT, REACHING OUT FROM UNDER THE ENVELOPING BODY OF REED RICHARDS, DAREDEVIL'S UNCANNY *SENSES* DIRECT HIS HAND TO--

SOME SORT OF ELECTRIC *POWER ROD!*

I'VE GOT TO *SHOCK* HIM WITH IT--LONG ENOUGH TO BREAK *FREE!*

:*UNHH!*:

HOW--COULD YOU SPOT THAT *ROD*-- WHEN I HAD YOU--TOTALLY *BLIND-FOLDED??*

THAT'S *MY* SECRET!

NOBODY CAN OPERATE SO WELL WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO *SEE*--

--UNLESS HE HAPPENS TO BE-- AN ELECTRONIC *ROBOT!*

--SUCH AS THE TYPE *DR. DOOM* EXCELS IN CREATING!

HE DOESN'T REALIZE MY *OTHER* SENSES MAKE UP FOR MY LIFELONG *BLINDNESS!*

{NOW, DUE TO MY OWN *POWER*, HE'S *SURE* TO BELIEVE I'M ONE OF DOOM'S *ROBOTS!*

HE'S MAKING A *LASSO*-- OF HIS *ARM!*

ALL RIGHT, MASKED MAN-- *JUMP!*

THANKS! JUST WHAT I *WANTED!*

AND, AT THAT MOMENT, ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE MULTI-POWERED FF IS ALSO DOING WHAT COMES NATURALLY--

WHAT'S KEEPIN' YA ON YER FEET, CURLEY?

WHEN I BELT A GUY, HE'S SUPPOSED TO STAY BELTED!

YOU TRYIN' TO GIMME A COMPLEX, OR SOMETHIN'?

O, MOST IMPERIAL SIRE--THOUGH THOU HAST MADE ME LESS THAN GODLIKE--

STILL AM I TRULY MORE THAN MORTAL!

THOUGH I HAVE BEEN FORSAKEN BY THEE--

NEITHER MY FAITH--NOR MY TRUST HAVE WAVERED!!

THUS, IN THY NAME--

BECAUSE I BE FLESH OF THY FLESH--BLOOD OF THY BLOOD--

THE VICTORY SHALL YET BE MINE!

SO SPEAKS THOR!!

I DON'T GIT IT!

HOW CAN ANY BLASTED ROBOT MANAGE TO TALK AS CORNY AS THAT--?

YEWWPH!

THIS IS **BATTY!!**

EVEN THOUGH WE **KNOW** WE'RE SUPPOSED TA **FLATTEN** THE WHOLE BUNCH'A YA--

WE KEEP **PULLIN'** OUR PUNCHES--ON ACCOUNT'A YA LOOK LIKE THE **GOOD GUYS!**

WITLESS CHURL! DOST THOU TAKE US FOR **KNAVES?**

THINK YOU WE BE **LESS** THAN WHAT WE **SEEM?**

HOW'S A GUY TO KNOW **WHAT** TO THINK--WITH YOU TALKIN' LIKE A REFUGEE FROM A ROAD-SHOW **HAMLET!**

I **CAN'T** MAKE MYSELF TEAR INTA HIM--I JUST **CAN'T!**

TO THINK THAT THE ONCE-PROUD **FANTASTIC FOUR** HAVE TURNED TO CRAVEN **SAVAGERY!**

NOW YA DID IT!

I AINT SURE I KNOW WHAT YA **SAID**--

--BUT IT SOUNDED TO ME LIKE YER **PUTTIN' DOWN** THE **FF**--

AND **NOBODY** DOES THAT WHILE **BASHFUL BENJAMIN'S** AROUND!!

MOVING WITH A **SPEED** BELYING HIS PONDEROUS **SIZE**, THE NOW-FIGHTING-MAD **THING** UNLEASHES ONE PULVERIZING BLOW--SHATTERING THE SOLID **CEMENT** BENEATH HIS FEET--!

KRAAM!

FIRST OF ALL--I'LL GITCHA INTO **CLOBBERIN'** POSITION--!

HAVE A **CARE**, MORTAL!

THOU ART TOYING WITH **POWER** FAR BEYOND THY COMPREHENSION!

YEAH--SURE!

I'LL TELL 'IM WHEN HE COMES **IN!**

AWRIGHT, ROBOT--

HERE'S WHERE I **PART** YA FROM ALL YER LITTLE **COGWHEELS!**

SMASH!

HEY! WHAT **GIVES--?**

I HIT **SOMETHIN'**--BUT--IT WUZN'T **THOR!**

HE'S STILL **STANDIN'**--LIKE NOTHIN' **HAPPENED!**

--AND HE LOOKS AS SURPRISED AS **I** AM!

THEN, EVEN AS THE *THING* STANDS IN MUTE MYSTIFICATION--

I THOUGHT *YOU* HAD MORE SENSE THAN THE *OTHERS*, RICHARDS!

I HOPED *YOU'D* LISTEN TO REASON--!

TRY ME, FELLA!

I'M STILL *WAIT-ING* FOR SOME *PROOF* FROM YOU!

BUT, I *TOLD* YOU--

I DON'T KNOW *HOW* TO PROVE I'M *ME!*

SUPPOSE *YOU* HAD TO PROVE YOU WERE REALLY *YOU*--

HOW WOULD YOU *DO* IT?

IT'S A GOOD *ARGUMENT*, MISTER!

YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN A *LAWYER!*

BUT IT SO HAPPENS I *KNOW* WHO I AM!

YOU'RE THE ONE I'M WORRIED ABOUT!

NOW, *TALK!!* TELL ME WHERE THE *REAL* DR. DOOM IS, AND I'LL-- *WHA-??!*

WHAT STOPPED MY BLOW FROM *LANDING.??*

I DID!

THAT *VOICE!* IT CAN ONLY BE--!!

SUE!

BUT--YOU SHOULDN'T *BE* HERE--!

I *HAD* TO COME, DARLING--TO SAVE YOU--FROM A *TERRIBLE MISTAKE!*

HE *IS* THE REAL DARE-DEVIL!

BUT-- HOW CAN *YOU* KNOW?

IT WAS ON THE SIX P.M. *TV NEWS!* DOOM'S IN *LATVERIA*--HE WAS ADDRESSING A CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS! THEN, WHEN I LEARNED *SPIDER-MAN, THOR,* AND *DAREDEVIL* WERE SEEN AT THE *BAXTER BUILDING*--AND AN *EXPLOSION* WAS REPORTED--I *COULDN'T* STAY AWAY!

I'M SURE GLAD YOU'RE A TV *FAN,* MRS. RICHARDS!

I GUESS THAT CLEARS THINGS UP, DD!

AND *THIS* TIME HE MEANS *DAREDEVIL*--

NOT DOC DOOM!

I FIGGERED IT WUZ YOU GUYS ALLA TIME!

NO BLAMED *ROBOTS* COULD FIGHT LIKE THAT!

WELL, AS *MAYOR LAGUARDIA* USED TO SAY--WHEN I MAKE A MISTAKE, IT'S A *WHOPPER!*

FORGET IT, FRIEND! WHERE *ELSE* COULD I GET A WORKOUT LIKE THAT!

WORKOUT? WE ALL *NEEDED* THIS WORKOUT LIKE *THOR* NEEDS A *WIG!*

AND, SPEAKING OF THAT ASGARDIAN HIPPIE--

WHERE *IS* HE?

HE'S HALFWAY ACROSS TOWN BY NOW!

HE SAID SOMETHIN' ABOUT HAVIN' TO FIGHT SOME CREEP CALLED THE *WRECKER!**

SHEESH! IT MUST TAKE A LOTTA *GUTS* TO WALK AROUND TOWN IN A GET-UP LIKE *THAT!*

*AND FIGHT HIM HE DOES, IN *THOR* #150!--SNEAK-A-PLUG STAN.

BUT WHAT ABOUT *DOOM?*

NOW THAT WE KNOW HE'S STILL *ALIVE,* WHY DON'T WE HIGHTAIL IT *AFTER* 'IM?

WE CAN'T INVADE THE SOVEREIGNTY OF HIS OWN *NATION,* BEN!

HUNH! LOOKS TO *ME* LIKE YA WOULDN'T IF YA *COULD*-- LEASTWAYS NOT *NOW!*

AS LONG AS DOOM REMAINS IN *LATVERIA,* WE CAN'T *TOUCH* HIM!

MMMM... I HOPE HE STAYS THERE *FOREVER!*

AND, IF YOU FIND THIS ENDING TOO *MUSHY,* BELIEVER-- REMEMBER, OUR COSTUMED CAVORTERS ARE *MEN* FIRST, AND SUPERHEROES *SECOND!*--IN FACT... AREN'T WE *ALL?*

NEXT: THE *SILVER SURFER* and *GALACTUS!*

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

12¢ IND. 74 MAY

MCG

WHEN CALLS GALACTUS!

THE FABULOUS F.F. LEARN THAT HUMANITY FACES *ARMAGEDDON...*

"WHEN CALLS GALACTUS"

ALICIA, BABY! I BROUGHT YA A *SURRRISE* FOR-- -;*UH OH!*-

LOOKS LIKE THE SURPRISE IS ON *ME!*

THERE MUST BE *SOME* WAY--TO *SAVE* YOU!

NO! IT IS TRULY-- *HOPELESS!*

BROUGHT TO YOU, IN ALL ITS MIND-EXPANDING MAJESTY, BY:

STAN LEE (THE MAN) *and* **JACK KIRBY** (KING)

EMBELLISHED BY:	LETTERED BY:
JOE SINNOTT	ARTIE SIMEK

BEN, DEAR--IS THAT YOU?

YEAH! 'N I'LL BET YER JUST TICKLED PINK ABOUT IT!

I DIDN'T KNOW I WUZ BUSTIN' UP A PARTY!

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK, DARLING! THE SURFER NEEDS HELP!

I HAVE NO TIME FOR EARTHLY SMALL TALK!

FOR, I HAVE BEEN SUMMONED ONCE AGAIN--BY MY FORMER MASTER--GALACTUS!

YOU AINT TALKIN' TO NO KID, DOME HEAD!

EVERYONE KNOWS HE EXILED YA HERE--FOREVER!

NO, BEN! YOU MUST BELIEVE HIM!

HE'S TELLING YOU THE TRUTH! I KNOW IT!

NUTS! I'M THRU KIDDIN' MYSELF!

YOU'D BELIEVE ANYTHING HE TELLS YA!

SO GO AHEAD --BELIEVE 'IM! BE MY GUEST!

BUT--IF IT IS TRUE--THINK WHAT IT MEANS!!

YEAH, YEAH! IT MEANS I GIVE HIM THESE CANDY-WANDIES--FER A GOIN' AWAY PRESENT!

'N I HOPE THEY GIVE YA HEARTBURN, YA BUM!

I HAVE HEARD ENOUGH!

HEY!

DOES YOUR ALL-TOO-HUMAN *JEALOUSY* BLIND YOU TO A DANGER WHICH MAY *DESTROY THE HUMAN RACE?!!*

HEY! HE REALLY *MEANS* IT.!

HE AINT *KIDDIN'!!*

LISTEN! LET HIM *EXPLAIN!*

FROM WHERE *I* SIT, I AINT GOT MUCH *CHOICE!*

GAZE INTO MY *EYES*-- DEEPER-- *DEEPER!*

NOW--*NOW* YOU SHALL SEE THE *MENACE* WHICH APPROACHES EVEN AS WE *SPEAK!*

YEAH! I *DO* SEE SOMETHIN'!!!

BUT, WHAT IN BLAZES *IS* IT?

HAVE YOU SO SOON FORGOTTEN--THE *PUNISHER?*

HE WUZ THE CREEP THAT *GALACTUS* TOSSED AT US THE *FIRST* TIME WE TANGLED, WITH 'IM!

AND NOW HE *RETURNS*--

STRONGER, MORE *POWERFUL* THAN EVER!

AND, WHILE THE DIRE IMPORT OF WHAT WE'VE BEHELD *SINKS IN,* LET US TURN TO THE *BAXTER BUILDING,* WHERE WE FIND--

THIS STEEL GIRDER WON'T DO, EITHER!

IT'S *MELTING*-- LIKE ALL THE *OTHERS!*

REED RICHARDS GAVE **ME** THE RESPONSIBILITY OF REPAIRING OUR HEAQUARTERS WITH THE **STRONGEST** MATERIAL WE CAN FIND!

ANYTHING STRONGER THAN **THAT** WILL COST A **FORTUNE,** SON!

THAT'S THE **LEAST** OF IT, FRIEND!

AND **THIS** STUFF JUST ISN'T **IT!**

ANYTHING **WEAKER** WOULD PROBABLY COST US OUR **LIVES!**

MAN! THIS HEADQUARTERS OF THEIRS SURE TOOK ONE HECK OF A **BEATING!**

IT **FIGGERS!** ALL THEY FOUGHT HERE THE OTHER DAY WAS **SPIDER-MAN, DAREDEVIL,** AND **THOR!***

*LAST ISH, TO BE EXACT...REMEMBER?--SMILEY.

YOU'D MAKE IT A LOT **EASIER** ON YOURSELVES--AND ON **US**--IF YOU GENTS WOULD STICK TO FIGHTING **ORDINARY** CROOKS, INSTEAD OF THOSE SUPER-POWERED **GOONS** YOU'RE ALWAYS MIXIN' IT UP WITH!

I SOMETIMES WONDER ABOUT IT **MYSELF,** MISTER!

WHAT MAKES YOU SPEND YOUR LIVES LEADING WITH YOUR **CHINS** THAT WAY, ANYHOW?

MAYBE WE JUST FIGURE **SOMEONE'S** GOTTA DO IT--OR IT'S **GOODBYE WORLD!**

HEY, **LOOK!!** UP THERE! **NOW** WHAT'RE WE IN FOR?

GANG-WAY, KIDDIES!

IT'S **BEN--!**

AND-- **THE SILVER SURFER!**

PLAYTIME'S *OVER*, JUNIOR!

WE GOT *WORK* TO DO!

ONCE *AGAIN* WE FACE THE TERRIBLE THREAT OF-- *GALACTUS!!*

GALACTUS?!!

YEAH! HE WANTS OL' SKIN-HEAD HERE SHOULD *JOIN* 'IM AGAIN!

WELL, WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT *THAT?*

THE SURFER'S ALWAYS *SAYING* HE MISSES HIS *FREEDOM*--HE MISSES RIDING THE *SPACE-WAYS* LIKE HE *USED* TO!

SO, LET HIM GO *BACK* TO GALACTUS!

TRUE! I CONSTANTLY LONG FOR THE GLORIOUS DAYS OF YORE--WHEN ALL THE WONDERS OF THE ENDLESS *GALAXIES* WERE MINE!

THEN WHAT'S THE *BIT*, BALDY? WHY THE PANIC ABOUT *GALACTUS?*

THAT'S *RIGHT!* HERE'S YOUR BIG *CHANCE!* SO WHAT'S THE HANG-UP?

THINK, HUMANS! THAT GALACTUS MAY *LIVE*-- PLANETS MUST *DIE!*

REMEMBER--HE *FEEDS* UPON THE ENERGY OF THE *WORLDS*--AS *YOU* FEED UPON EARTHLY *CALORIES!*

HE WOULD NOT *NEED* ME, UNLESS--HE IS *STARVING!!*

LOOK! OUT THE *WINDOW--!*

IT IS--THE *PUNISHER!*

--GUIDED TO THIS SPOT BY THE *PULSATIONS* OF MY OWN *BODY!*

PERMIT US TO QUOTE FROM *FF#49*: "A STRANGE, HEAVILY-ARMED BEING--HALF-ROBOT, HALF-ALIVE! THIS IS THE *PUNISHER*...A COMPACT, SUPREMELY MERCILESS HARD-CORE MASS OF MAYHEM, FROM THE OUTER RIM OF THE KNOWN UNIVERSE!"

AND NOW--- *HERE HE COMES!*

THOUGH MY OWN *POWER* IS BUT A *FRACTION* OF WHAT IT ONCE HAD BEEN--

PERHAPS I CAN *STILL* MUSTER A STRONG ENOUGH *ATOM-COMPACTING THRUST--!*

WE *DARE* NOT WAIT UNTIL HE HAS *REACHED* US!

SHEESH! WOTTA *BLAST!*

HEY--*NOW* WHAT GIVES? WHITEY'S STARTIN' TO *FALL!*

I *GOTCHA*, PAL! ARE YA *OKAY?*

DIDJA *PULVERIZE* THAT PUNK?

NO! I MERELY *DELAYED* HIM--TO GAIN US PRECIOUS *TIME!*

A BLAST LIKE *THAT*--WHICH ALMOST KNOCKED YOU OUT--

--AND IT DIDN'T EVEN *FINISH* HIM!--LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR A *FIGHT!*

THE DANGER IS FAR *GREATER* THAN YOU YET *SUSPECT!*

WHAT'RE *WE* DOIN' HERE? LET'S HEAD FOR THE *HILLS!*

STAY WITH THE SURFER, KID--TILL HE GITS HIS *MOXIE* BACK!

I'LL HANDLE THE PUNISHER--IF HE KEEPS *COMIN'!*

GALACTUS DID *VOW* TO *NEVER RETURN*--AND YET, HE IS *HERE!*

THAT CAN ONLY MEAN--HE GROWS *DESPERATE* FOR NOURISHMENT--

AND, WHEN SUCH A BEING KNOWS *HUNGER*--

THEN, LET THE *COSMOS BEWARE!*

YOU OUGHTTA WRITE *COMIN' ATTRACTIONS* FER HORROR MOVIES, PAL.!

YA SURE KNOW HOW TO *SHAKE* A FELLA UP!

BEN, *WAIT!* TAKE ME *WITH* YOU!

RELAX, JUNIOR!

IF I *NEEDJA*, I'LL WAVE MY LITTLE COTTON *HANKY* THREE TIMES!

THIS NEW *JET-GIZMO* OF REED'S IS THE CAT'S MEOW!

BUT I *STILL* KINDA MISS THE OL' *FANTASTI-CAR*, AND THE EVER-LOVIN' *POGO PLANE!*

IF HE EVER GITS 'EM OUTTA MOTHBALLS, I'LL-- =*UH OH!*=

WHAT'S *THAT* UP THERE--?

I HEARD OF *ROOF GARDENS*, BUT THIS IS *REEEEDICULOUS!*

WHATEVER IT IS, IT KINDA *TICKLES*-- LIKE IT'S-- *ALIVE--!*

=*HEY!*= WHEN THE SURFER SAID SOMETHIN' ABOUT AN *ATOM-COMPACTIN' THRUST*-- DID HE MEAN IT WOULD CAUSE --*THIS?*

HOOO BOY!! THAT'LL TEACH *ME* TO ASK LAME-BRAINED *QUESTIONS!*

ALL I HADDA DO WAS *TOUCH* IT TO MAKE IT COME *APART*--

=*UNHHH!*=

LOOKS LIKE I WIN ME A TWO-BIT *SEE-GAR!*

AND I GOT ME A PRETTY GOOD HUNCH WHAT'S *INSIDE!!*

OKAY, CHARLIE-- LET'S TAKE A *BREAK*, HUH?

THIS AINT MY IDEA OF A FULL-TIME *FUN-FEST!*

SO, IF YER *THRU* KIDDIN' AROUND--

HOW'S ABOUT TELLIN' ME WHERE THE *SURFER'S* GONE TO?

YOU AINT EXACTLY A *CHATTERBOX*, ARE YA, CHUCKLES?

WELL, IF YA AINT GONNA *TALK*--

LET'S KINDA FINISH UP WHERE WE LEFT *OFF*--!

I GOTTA HUNCH THAT *THIS* IS WHAT YA WUZ TRYIN' TO DO--!

NOW DON'T WORRY ABOUT A *THING*, MARVIN!

WHEREVER YA *LAND*, I WON'T LETCHA GIT TOO *LONELY*--

'CAUSE I'LL COME'N *GITCHA* ON THE FIRST BOUNCE!

BUT SUDDENLY, THE ORANGE-SKINNED POWERHOUSE FINDS HIMSELF DRAWN INTO THE AIR BY SOME STRANGE, INVISIBLE *FORCE*--

HEY! WHAT'S GOIN' *ON* HERE--?!!

WHO'S THE BLASTED *WISE-GUY?*?

IT'S THE *PUNISHER!!*

HE'S GOT SOME NUTTY KINDA *FORCE FIELD* GOIN' FOR 'IM!

AND HE STILL AINT EVEN OPENED HIS *YAP!*

BOY! NEXT TO *HIM*, OL' *BLACK BOLT* IS A *TALKIN' FOOL!*

HEY! HE TOSSED ME RIGHT INTO A BLASTED *SMOKE STACK!*

IF THE *FALL* DON'T FINISH ME, THE *FUMES'LL* PROBABLY DO IT!

BUT, AT THAT VERY INSTANT--

IT'S THE *PUNISHER!* I'VE *FOUND* HIM!

NOW THAT THE *SURFER* IS SAFELY HIDDEN--I CAN PLOW *INTO* HIM--!

IT'S A FUNNY THING TO THINK OF *NOW*, BUT--

I WONDER WHERE *REED* IS-- AND WHAT HE'S *DOING!*

AS FOR *US*, WE'RE GLAD THAT JOHNNY ASKED--BECAUSE *WE* WERE WONDERING, TOO! ERGO--

SUE DARLING, YOU'VE *GOT* TO LEAVE THE CITY UNTIL AFTER THE *BABY* ARRIVES! I *INSIST* UPON IT!

BUT, WHAT IF THERE'S *DANGER?* WHAT IF YOU *NEED* ME AGAIN?

WE CAN FACE IT FAR *BETTER* IF WE KNOW THAT YOU'RE *SAFE!*

WE *BOTH* KNOW HE'S *RIGHT*, SUE!

CRYSTAL WILL GO ALONG, TO LOOK AFTER YOU, HONEY!

WITH ALL THE ENEMIES WE HAVE, YOU KNOW IT'S FOR THE BEST!

AFTER ALL--WE MUST TAKE NO CHANCES--TILL AFTER THE BABY ARRIVES!

SUE--WHAT IS IT, DEAR?

IF YOU'RE THIS CAUTIOUS NOW--

HOW WILL YOU BE AFTER YOU BECOME A FATHER?

CRYSTAL SIGNALLING ME! SHE SEES SOMETHING--OUT THE WINDOW!

SOMETHING THAT SUE MUSTN'T SEE!

IT'S THE TORCH--BATTLING FOR HIS LIFE AGAINST--

I CAN'T BE SURE--BUT, IF IT'S WHO I THINK--!

WE'VE GOT TO GET SUE AWAY--FAST!

JOHNNY? OH, NO!!

DARLING, YOU'VE BEEN ON YOUR FEET TOO LONG!

SIT DOWN NOW WHILE CRYS CHECKS THE TIME-TABLES!

YOU'LL BE MORE COMFORTABLE AWAY FROM THE WINDOW--

WHERE IT'S LESS DRAFTY!

I JUST REMEMBERED--

I HAVE TO CHECK OUT SOME THINGS AT THE BAXTER BUILDING!

ALL RIGHT, DEAR!

I'M A LITTLE TIRED, ANYWAY!

I'LL MAKE US SOME TEA!

I HATED TO LIE TO HER--

BUT I HAD NO CHOICE!

NOW, IF ONLY I CAN REACH THE LAD--IN TIME!!

AND, EVEN AS THE GRIMLY-DETERMINED *MR. FANTASTIC* SPEEDS TO THE SENSES-SHATTERING SCENE OF BATTLE--

THESE *THERMO-BLASTS* OUGHT TO KEEP HIM AT BAY--

--TILL I CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO *DO* WITH HIM!

-UH OH!- HE'S TRYING TO HURL HIMSELF OUT OF *RANGE!*

BUT I'LL *SLOW* HIM DOWN BY *ELECTRIFYING* EVERY ROOF-TOP *LIGHTNING ROD* IN HIS PATH!

IT'S *WORKING!* THE CURRENT IS FORCING HIM *BACK--!*

BUT, HE MANAGED TO *SAVE* HIMSELF--

BY PLUNGING INTO THE *RIVER!*

OH, NO!!

HE DID *MORE* THAN JUST SAVE HIMSELF--

HE USED HIS REMAINING *POWER* TO MAKE THE WATER GUSH *UPWARDS*--

AND *NOW*-- IT'S *DOUSING* MY *FLAME!*

BUT, REALIZING HOW GRAVE THE *DANGER* IS, HELP IS *ALREADY* ON THE WAY--IN THE FRANTIC, FAST-MOVING FORM OF--*MR. FANTASTIC*--!

CAN'T AFFORD TO WAIT FOR A *BUS*!

NOT IF JOHNNY'S BATTLING THE ONE I *THINK* HE IS!

I WAS *RIGHT*!

IT'S THE *PUNISHER*!

AND I'M NOT A SECOND TOO *SOON*!

MY *FIRST* JOB IS TO GET THE BOY TO *SAFETY*!

SSWOOSH

SSTRETCH

JOHNNY'S ALL RIGHT-- JUST *STUNNED*!

EVEN THE *HUMAN TORCH* CAN'T BE EXPECTED TO HOLD OFF A HALF-ROBOT BEING FROM *OUTER SPACE*--

ESPECIALLY SINCE HE WAS CREATED BY *GALACTUS* HIMSELF!

BUT, IF THE *PUNISHER* IS HERE, IT MEANS THAT *GALACTUS* HAS RETURNED, AS WELL!

HEADS UP! NO MORE TIME FOR *DAY-DREAMING*!

HE'S LAUNCHING HIS ATTACK!!

WHUFFF!

LUCKILY, MY BODY CAN ABSORB HIS CHARGE!

NOW, IF I CAN JUST KEEP HIM SNARLED UP--!

IT'S NO GOOD! --HE'S MUCH TOO POWERFUL!!

HE'S TWISTING ME AROUND LIKE A RUBBER BAND!

GALACTUS-- DESIGNED HIM-- WELL!

NO LIVING BEING--COULD STRIKE--WITH SUCH SPEED --SUCH LIMITLESS FORCE--!

I HAVEN'T-- THE POWER-- TO DEFEAT HIM!

KRUTCH

BUT-- I MUST-- HOLD ON! --CAN'T GIVE UP!

MUST-- FIND SOME WAY-- TO STOP HIM--!

MEANWHILE, IN THE REMOTE, UNCHARTED VASTNESS BETWEEN THE GALAXIES--

--AN AWESOME SPACE-CRAFT CARRIES THE MOST SUPREMELY ***DESTRUCTIVE*** FIGURE IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE ON HIS NEVER-ENDING MISSION OF SURVIVAL--

BUT, ALAS--IN ORDER FOR ***GALACTUS*** TO SURVIVE--ENTIRE ***PLANETS*** MUST PERISH!

MY JOURNEYING HAS BEEN IN ***VAIN!***

EACH STAR I VISIT IS ***BARREN!***

SAVE FOR THE PLANET ***EARTH***-- THIS SECTOR SEEMS WOEFULLY DEVOID OF ***LIFE!***

BUT, GALACTUS CAN WAIT ***NO LONGER!***

WITHOUT THE NOURISHMENT OF A LIVING PLANET-- I ***DIE!***

AND GALACTUS MUST ***NEVER*** PERISH!

ONLY MY ONCE-AND-FORMER *HERALD* NOW MAY SAVE ME!

FOR *HE WHO RODE THE SPACEWAYS* WAS MY EVER-CONSTANT *GUIDE!*

HIS EXILE NOW MUST *END*--WHILST THE *HUNGER OF AGES* DOES GNAW WITHIN ME!

AND, THOUGH I HAVE PLEDGED THAT *EARTH* SHALL EVER BE *INVIOLATE*--

THE BECKONING SPECTER OF GRIM *STARVATION* MAY CAUSE SO EPHEMERAL A CONVENANT TO SOON BE *SHATTERED!*

IF GALACTUS MEANS WHAT WE *THINK* HE MEANS, MANKIND IS *AGAIN* IN MORTAL DANGER! AND, WHEN HE FINDS THE *SURFER*--! BUT, BACK TO *EARTH*, NOW--

WHAT'S THAT *THUMPING* BEHIND THE WALL?

I DUNNO-- BUT WE'D BETTER CHECK IT OUT!

I'LL SAVE YA THE *TROUBLE*, KIDDIES!

I JUST FELL INTO THAT BLASTED *CHIMINEY* O' YOURS!

I'D'A WAITED TILL YA *FOUND* ME-- BUT THE *SMOKE* WUZ TICKLIN' MY NOSY-PIE!

NOW *MOVE IT!* I GOT *PLACES* TO GO!

SAY! AREN'T YOU-- THE *THING?!!*

NAW, I'M THE *WIZARD OF OZ*--LOOKIN' FER THE NAUGHTY WITCH!

PUT YER *EYES* BACK IN YER HEAD AND 'LEMME GIT *IN* THAT THERE HEAP--!

HEAD FER THE *PUNISHER* --'N DON'T SPARE THE HORSES!

I--DON'T KNOW ANYTHING--ABOUT A *PUNISHER*--BUT SOMETHING'S HAPPENING AT THE *WATERFRONT!*

THEN *THAT* MUST BE WHERE HE'S *AT!*

LET'S GO!!

THE POLICE ARE TRYING TO *ROPE OFF* THE AREA!

AND GO THEY *DO*--UNTIL--

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!!

BEN! AM I GLAD TO SEE *YOU* NOW, OLD TIMER!

THAT'S MORE THAN *LAUGHIN' BOY* OVER THERE IS GONNA SAY!!

BUT, BE CAREFUL! HIS STRENGTH IS EVEN GREATER THAN YOURS! AND HE-- BEN!!

KRAK

NOW YA WENT 'N GOT ME MAD!

I'LL SHOW YA WHO'S STRONGER THAN THE EVER-LOVIN' THING--!

NOBODY!! --THAT'S WHO!

IT'S NOT ONLY HIS STRENGTH--IT'S HIS SPEED!

LOOK OUT!

BTHONK

I'M LOOKIN'--I'M LOOKIN'!!

AINT IT ABOUT TIME YA REALIZED THAT BASHFUL BENJAMIN AINT EXACTLY NO PANTY-WAIST STICK-IN-THE-MUD HIMSELF?!!

HAW! LOOKS LIKE I'M REALLY GITTIN' TO 'IM NOW!

HE'S STARTIN' TO PUT ONE'A THEM NUTTY, OUTER SPACE FORCE FIELDS AROUND 'IMSELF!

CAREFUL, BEN! IT MIGHT BE SOME TYPE OF COSMIC PHOTON ENERGY!

IZZAT SO?

I THOUGHT IT WAS SUMPIN' HE PICKED UP AT THE A&P!

YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND!

IF IT BURSTS OPEN, IT CAN HURL YOU--

NOW HE TELLS ME!

TOO LATE!

LEAVE HIM FOR ME, BLUE EYES!

NOW THAT I'M DRY, I CAN FLAME ON AGAIN!

AND WE'VE GOT A LITTLE UNFINISHED BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF!

HOW ABOUT THAT?

I SOFTEN 'IM UP, 'N THEN JUNIOR COMES ALONG, AND--HEY!!

WHAT'S THAT?!!

THE PUNISHER!! HE'S VANISHING--!

JOHNNY BOY! WAS IT YOUR FLAME THAT DID IT?

NO! IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ME!

ONE MINUTE HE'S THERE-- 'N THEN, KERPLOOIE--

MEBBE WE GOT BAD BREATH!

HE WAS NO MORE THAN A *TOOL* OF GALACTUS!

HE WOULD NEVER HAVE BROKEN OFF THE FIGHT *HIMSELF*--

THAT MEANS HIS *MASTER* CALLED HIM BACK AGAIN! --BUT, *WHY?!?*

WHO *CARES?* HE MIGHT'A WANTED HIS *BACK* SCRATCHED!

GALACTUS ISN'T INTERESTED IN *US!*

HE SENT THE *PUNISHER* TO FIND HIS FORMER *HERALD!*

AND HE PROBABLY *RECALLED* HIM WHEN HE REALIZED THE *SURFER* IS TOO WELL *HIDDEN!*

SO WHAT HAPPENS *NEXT?*

THE *NEXT* MOVE--IS UP TO-- *GALACTUS!*

AND, EVEN AS REED RICHARDS SPEAKS--

THE *PUNISHER* ZOOMS ACROSS, AROUND, AND BETWEEN THE ENDLESS GALAXIES, UNTIL--

BACK TO YOUR CUBICLE, FAITHFUL ONE--

IT IS TIME FOR *GALACTUS* TO DO WHAT MUST BE *DONE!*

I SHALL APPROACH THE PERIPHERY OF THE *SOLAR SYSTEM* ITSELF!

FOR, I DARE COME NO *CLOSER* TO THE VERDANT PLANET *EARTH!*

--LEST THE *AROMA* OF ITS LIVING *ENERGY* BE MORE THAN EVEN *GALACTUS* MAY RESIST!

INSTEAD, I SHALL EMPLOY MY COSMIC *LIFE PROBE*--

TO BRIDGE THE *VOID* FROM HERE TO EARTH--

--AND UNERRINGLY *REVEAL* THE PLACE WHERE I SHALL FIND--THE *SILVER SURFER!*

HEY--LOOK'A THAT *BEAM* UP IN THE SKY!

LIKE A GIANT *SPOTLIGHT*-- BUT IN *REVERSE!*

RIGHT! IT'S COMING FROM OUT IN *SPACE!*

20

IT CAN ONLY MEAN-- *GALACTUS* WON'T GIVE UP--TILL HE FINDS THE *SURFER!*

AND, IF HE *DOES*--THE WORLD MAY NEVER BE THE *SAME!*

REED, I JUST *REMEMBER* SOMETHING--!

BEFORE HE VANISHED, THE SURFER SAID--

THERE ARE WORLDS-- WITHIN WORLDS!

NEXT ISSUE: YOU WILL JOURNEY TO *THE* MICROVERSE!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

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MCG

WHAT PROFITETH A MAN TO FLEE HIS FATE? FOR, HE SHALL SURELY FIND...

WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS!

CAN THE FF HOLD OFF GALACTUS LONG ENOUGH TO LEARN THE SECRET OF...

"WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS!"

IF YA ASK *ME*, OL' STRETCHO LOST HIS *MARBLES*--

--MAKIN US HANG AROUND THIS NUTTY *ISLAND*, JUST SO'S NO *CROWDS'LL* GIT HURT WHEN WE TANGLE WITH *GALACTUS* AGAIN!

AWW, *RELAX*, BLUE-EYES

YOU WOULDN'T BE *HAPPY* IF YOU COULDN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT *SOMETHING!*

DONATED TO MIGHTY MARVELDOM BY:
STAN (THE MAN) LEE *and* JACK (KING) KIRBY

EMBELLISHMENT: JOE SINNOTT

LETTERING: ARTIE SIMEK

GALACTUS TOSSED THE *PUNISHER* AT US 'N WE *CLOBBERED* 'IM.!*

SO WHAT'RE WE *WORRIED* ABOUT?

THAT OVERSIZED SPACE ZOMBIE CAN'T SCARE *ME.!*

YOU'RE WHISTLING IN THE *DARK,* BENJAMIN!

GALACTUS DOESN'T CARE ABOUT *US.!* WE'RE VIRTUALLY BENEATH HIS *NOTICE.!*

IT'S THE *SILVER SURFER* HE'S AFTER--

AND HE'S CAPABLE OF DESTROYING AN ENTIRE *WORLD* IN ORDER TO *GET* HIM.!

ANY *MORE* BRIGHT QUESTIONS, BENJY BOY?

*IT HAPPENED RIGHT *HERE,* IN *FF#74.! SEE* WHY IT BREAKS OUR HEARTS WHEN YOU MISS AN ISH?--SYMPATHETIC STAN.

NUTS.! I DON'T CARE *WHAT* YA SAY.!

I'M SICK 'N *TIRED'A* WAITIN' AROUND FOR SOMETHIN' TO *HAPPEN.!*

THWOOM!!

COOL IT, BIG BUDDY!

NO SENSE WASTING YOUR STRENGTH ON *TREE TRUNKS--*

--'SPECIALLY WHEN WE *STILL* DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE *IN* FOR.!

AND TRY THINKING OF SOMEONE *ELSE* FOR A CHANGE.!

REMEMBER, *SUE* IS STILL IN THE CITY--ALONE WITH CRYSTAL.!

DO YOU THINK I *LIKE* BEING AWAY FROM HER-- AT A TIME LIKE *THIS.?*

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT.! I *GIT* YER POINT.!

SO LONG AS THE *SILVER SURFER* REMAINS HIDDEN, *GALACTUS* WILL-- *LOOK.!*

I *KNEW* HE WOULDN'T GIVE UP.! HE'S STILL *SEARCHING--* WITH A *SPACE RAY.!*

REED.! WHAT IF HE-- *FINDS* HIM?

I DON'T CARE WHAT ANYONE SAYS, YA HEAR?

I AINT SCARED OF A DOZEN GALACTUSES!

IF I EVER GIT MY MITTS ON 'IM, I'LL CLOBBER THE BUM.!

COME OFF IT, BEN.!

WE'RE NOT DEALING WITH THE USUAL SUPER-POWERED MENACE--

YOU'RE TRYING TO CHALLENGE A BEING WHO CAN ANNIHILATE WHOLE PLANETS.!

AT THIS VERY INSTANT, HE COULD BE HOVERING ANYWHERE IN THE COSMOS, TRYING TO DECIDE OUR FATE.!

--A LIVING ENTITY TO WHOM GALAXIES ARE NO MORE THAN STEPPING STONES.!

AND, EVEN AS REED RICHARDS SPEAKS, A MIGHTY SPACECRAFT ORBITS NEAR A LONG-DEAD STAR--

AS, WITHIN THE INFINITY-SPANNING CELESTIAL CRUISER, THE EMOTIONLESS VOICE OF GALACTUS COLDLY MURMERS--

ENOUGH.! LET THE PROBE-RAY CEASE.!

MY HERALD-WHO-WAS HAS FOUND A MOST EFFECTIVE PLACE OF CONCEALMENT.!

CLICK.!

BUT, HE CANNOT HIDE HIMSELF FROM *ME!*

NOT FROM ONE WHO CAN LEVEL A *CONTINENT,* ATOM BY ATOM, TILL THE PRIZE HE SEEKS IS *FOUND!*

ALTHOUGH I HAVE GIVEN MY *WORD*-- THE INVIOLATE BOND OF *GALACTUS*-- NEVER TO MENACE THE PLANET *EARTH*--

THE SILVER SURFER MUST BE FOUND!!

AND, FOUND HE SHALL BE!

FOR MY NEVER-ENDING *HUNGER* MUST BE APPEASED--

AND ONLY *HE* CAN FIND GALACTUS A *WORLD*--A WORLD WHOSE *ENERGY* I MUST SWIFTLY *DRAIN*--ELSE I SURELY *STARVE!*

BUT, IS IT NOT *ORDAINED* THAT GALACTUS MUST *NEVER* STARVE?

SOONER WOULD I BREAK MY *VOW*--AND LEAVE THE *EARTH* AN EMPTY LIFELESS SHELL!

STILL, THERE YET MAY BE *ANOTHER* COURSE--

THOSE *HUMANS* HAVE BEFRIENDED MY SPACE-BORN QUARRY!

NOW MUST THEY BE COMPELLED--TO *BETRAY* HIM!

THUS, BY THE POWER OF *TRANSCENDENT THOUGHT,* I MUST *STRIKE*--

--FROM ACROSS THE CHASM OF A *BILLION* LIGHT YEARS!

HEY! THE ISLAND'S BEGINNIN' TO *SHAKE!!*

THIS IS *NUTTY!* WHO EVER HEARD OF AN *EARTHQUAKE*--HERE IN *NEW YORK?!!*

IT'S MORE THAN *THAT,* BEN--

IT'S *GALACTUS* --AT *LAST!*

I KNEW HE WOULDN'T GIVE UP! THE PRIZE IS TOO GREAT!

HE'LL TRY TO FORCE US TO REVEAL-- LOOK OUT!

THE ENTIRE ISLAND IS BEING UPROOTED-- AS EFFORTLESSLY AS A PLASTIC TOY!

FLAME ON, JOHNNY! YOU'VE GOT TO SAVE YOURSELF!

BEN! DON'T LET GO! I'LL TRY TO REACH OUT TO YOU--!

HOW CAN-- GALACTUS-- BE DOIN' ALL THIS--?

YA SAID-- HE WUZ STILL--IN ORBIT SOME-WHERE!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW, BENJY!

IF IT IS HIM-- THIS COULD BE D-DAY--FOR THE HUMAN RACE!

I STILL SAY YER ALL A BUNCH'A WORRY WARTS!

WHO CARES ABOUT SOME CORNY-- UH OH!!

I'M SLIPPIN' OFF! EVERYTHING'S MOVIN' TOO FAST!

ALL THE ROCKS ARE BREAKIN' UP! THE ISLAND'S BEGINNIN' TO SPIN--!

QUICK, BEN-- YOUR HAND! GIVE ME YOUR HAND-- NOW!

BUT, EVEN THE DAZZLING SKILL AND SPEED OF MR. FANTASTIC CANNOT MATCH THE DEAFENING AVALANCHE OF SOIL AND STONE WHICH COMPLETELY INUNDATES THE ORANGE-SKINNED THING--!

BEN!

BEN'S GONE! AND NOW--I TOO--AM POWERLESS--!

SPINNING AROUND--IN THIS WHIRLPOOL-- TOO FAST-- TO ESCAPE!

BEING DRAWN DOWN--UNDER THE SURFACE--

MY ONLY CHANCE-- SHAPE MYSELF LIKE A LIVING BALL--

WILL BE ABLE--TO STORE SOME OXYGEN-- THIS WAY!

REED! BEN!

THEY BOTH VANISHED-- WITH THE SINKING ISLE!

IT HAPPENED SO FAST-- THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO!

BUT, IT CAN'T END LIKE THIS! NOT-- AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THRU!

I'VE GOT TO REACH THEM-- TO SAVE THEM-- SOMEHOW!

BUT, SUDDENLY--BEFORE THE HUMAN TORCH CAN MAKE ANOTHER MOVE--

HEY! NOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?

THEY'RE FLOATING UPWARD-- LIKE TOY BALLOONS!

HE DIDN'T WANT TO KILL US--

HE HAS A MORE INCREDIBLE OBJECTIVE!

JOHNNY! STAY BACK! DON'T FOLLOW US--!

NO! I'VE GOT TO! YOU NEED ME!

IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN-- UP HERE--!!

WE'VE GONE TOO FAR!!

IT'S THE EDGE OF SPACE!!

THERE'S-- NO AIR-- LEFT!

MY FLAME'S DIED OUT!

FIRE CAN'T BURN-- WITHOUT OXYGEN!

THAT'S ALL WE NEEDED--

A SCIENCE LESSON-- WHILE WE SUFFO-CATE!

WE'RE-- STARTIN' TO-- FREEZE!

CAN'T LAST-- MUCH LONGER!

REED--'N THE KID--ALREADY LOOK DONE FOR!

BUT THEN, A SUDDEN, INDESCRIBABLE, IMPOSSIBLE UPHEAVAL OCCURS! A TOTALLY NOISELESS EXPLOSION! AN INVISIBLE BLAZE OF LIGHT! A MOTIONLESS SURGE OF SPEED!

AND, WHEN THE MAD, INCOMPREHENSIBLE CATACLYSM IS FINALLY ENDED--

WE'RE--STILL ALIVE!
STILL ABLE-- TO BREATHE--
BUT, WHAT IN BLAZES HAPPENED??
I DON'T KNOW! REMEMBER-- WE'RE DEALING WITH GALACTUS!
HEY, LOOK!! OVER THERE--!
HOW CAN IT BE??
YOU SAY GALACTUS IS A HOT SHOT!--I SAY HE'S A NUT!
HOW DO YOU FIGURE IT, REED?
WE'RE RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED--
JUST LIKE NOTHIN' EVER HAPPENED!
ONE THING IS CERTAIN--
GALACTUS DOES NOTHING WITHOUT A REASON! HE MUST HAVE-- WAIT!!
SOMETHING'S COMING OUT OF THE WATER--!
WADDAYA MEAN SOMETHING??
IT'S US!

THAT WAS HIS PURPOSE!
HE MADE SOULLESS REPLICAS OF US!
BEN! LOOK OUT! THEY'RE ATTACKING!!
YEAH-- I KINDA NOTICED!
THEY EVEN HAVE THE SAME POWERS AS WE DO!
WE'RE EACH BEING ASSAULTED BY OUR OWN COUNTER-PART!
WELL, I'LL BEAT MY CARBON COPY TO THE PUNCH!
HERE'S WHERE THE REAL HUMAN TORCH STRIKES FIRST!
-UNHHH!- IT--DIDN'T WORK!
HE MET MY BLAST-- WITH A BOLT OF ENERGY--
LIKE NOTHING-- I EVER FELT BEFORE!
HOW CAN THE SURFER-- HOPE TO STAY HIDDEN--
FROM A POWER-- THAT CAN CREATE-- BEINGS LIKE THIS?!!
AND, SINCE THE TORCH ASKED--
WITH EACH PASSING SECOND I GROW SMALLER!
SOON I SHALL ATTAIN SUB-ATOMIC SIZE!
FOR, ONLY BY VANISHING INTO A DROP OF CHEMICAL FLUID--HERE ON A MICROSCOPE SLIDE IN THE LABORATORY OF REED RICHARDS--
CAN I HOPE TO LOSE MYSELF IN A WORLD FAR BENEATH THE NOTICE OF ALL-SEEING GALACTUS!

HERE, WITHIN THIS TOTALLY ALIEN UNIVERSE--THIS MAD MENAGE OF WHIRLING MOLECULES--

HERE SHALL I HIDE--TILL GALACTUS *ABANDONS* HIS QUEST!

EVEN WITHIN THE *SMALLEST* BIT OF MATTER--

AN ENDLESS *COSMOS* MAY EXIST!

FOR *SIZE* IS EVER-CHANGING, EVER-RELATIVE--

AND, THE *SUN* AND *PLANETS* I SEE BEFORE ME *PROVE*, BEYOND ALL DOUBT, THAT THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN-- AND WILL ALWAYS BE--*WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS!*

MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, OUR DAUNTLESS DERRING-DOERS ARE HAVING TROUBLE ENOUGH IN THEIR *OWN* PARTICULAR WORLD! VOILA--

STAY *WITH* IT, BEN.!

HE MAY EQUAL YOUR *STRENGTH*-- BUT WHAT ABOUT YOUR BATTLE *KNOW-HOW?*

=*UHHH!*= CAN'T *TALK* ANY MORE! HAVE TO FIGHT BACK *MYSELF*--!

THAT'S *OKAY*, STRETCHO--

YA *ALREADY* SAID ENUFF!

ZOK!

HEY! WHAT *GIVES?*

THAT DIDN'T EVEN *SLOW* 'IM DOWN!

WHAT'S HE BUSTIN' UP THAT *BOULDER* FOR?

THPAMM!

OKAY, SO I *ASKED* A DOPEY QUESTION!

BUT A LITTLE THING LIKE *THAT* AINT GONNA PUT THE *KIBOSH* ON AMERICA'S FAVORITE LUMPY-SKINNED SWEETIE!

SKRAK!

NOT IF *I* CAN HELP IT!

AND I GOT ME A HUNCH I *CAN!*

MY *OWN* COUNTER-PART IS TRYING TO *CRUSH* ME--WITH A *METALLIC* GRIP!

I'VE GOT TO MAKE MY BODY *EXPAND* --TO ITS *FULLEST* EXTENT!

I *DID* IT!

I BROKE HIS GRIP-- AND FLUNG HIM *AWAY!*

BUT, HE'S ATTACKING *AGAIN*--

USING HIS FLEXIBLE LIMBS IN A MORE *DANGEROUS* WAY THAN I WOULD *EVER* DO!

FTASS!

IT'S LIKE FIGHTING *MYSELF!*

EXCEPT *THIS* VERSION OF ME IS A MURDEROUS *KILLER!*

ONLY MY OWN *FLEXIBILITY*--

--COULD HAVE *SAVED* ME THEN!

BUT, HE'S COMPLETELY *RELENTLESS!*

HE WON'T GIVE ME A MINUTE TO *RECOVER*-- TO STRIKE *BACK!*

UNHHH! HE--*PINNED* ME--WITH A SUDDEN-- *HAMMER WEDGE!*

THERE'S-- *NO* WAY OUT NOW!

I'VE GOT TO-- *DESTROY* HIM! IT'S *MY* LIFE-- OR *HIS!*

I DIDN'T--*WANT* TO! WANTED TO *RESTRAIN* HIM--GET *MESSAGE* BACK--TO *GALACTUS!*

BUT--HE'S TOO-- *DANGEROUS!*

HOWEVER, BEFORE THE FIGHTING *LEADER* OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPER-TEAM CAN LAUNCH HIS COUNTER-ATTACK--

LET GO OF HIM, YOU ROTTEN, RUBBER-SKINNED *RAT!*

ZT

GOOD BOY, JOHNNY! YOUR *FLAME BOLT* DROVE HIM BACK!

--AND, THAT GIVES ME AN *IDEA!*

THEY WERE EACH CREATED FOR *ONE* PURPOSE--TO FIGHT THEIR *COUNTERPARTS!*

BUT, IF WE *SWITCH* OPPONENTS--THEY WON'T KNOW HOW TO *HANDLE* US!

I *READ* YOU, BOSS MAN!

IT'S WORTH A *TRY!*

YOU TACKLE THE PHONY, *TORCH*--

WHILE *I* TRY TO HELP *BEN!*

WE'VE GOT TO MOVE *FAST*--TO KEEP THEM OFF-BALANCE!

I WAS RIGHT!

LOOK HOW CONFUSED HE SEEMS!

HE NEVER EXPECTED TO BE ATTACKED BY ME!

WITH LUCK, I'LL REACH HIM BEFORE HE REMEMBERS TO FLAME ON!

YOU DID IT!

YOU SMOTHERED HIS FLAME BEFORE HE REACHED FULL IGNITION!

AND NOW YOU'LL SEE WHAT YOUR BLAZING BROTHER-IN-LAW CAN DO!

HOLD IT, BEN! EASE AWAY, BIG FELLA!

LEAVE YOUR MUSCLE-BOUND PLAYMATE FOR ME, AND TACKLE THE ERSATZ STRETCHO!

REED'S ORDERS, BLUE EYES!

OKAY, JUNIOR! DON'T MAKE NO DIFF TO ME!

I DON'T GIVE TWO HOOTS IN HOBOKEN WHO I FIGHT--

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

JUST SO'S I GIT A CHANCE TO SING OUT--

NOTHIN' LIKE PUTTIN' THE OL' *DOUBLE WHAMMY* ON A GUY TO MAKE YA FEEL LIKE A *MILLION BUCKS!*

HOPE YA BRUNG A *LIFE BELT*, SWEETIE!

GOOD GOING, PARTNER!

NOW I'LL GIVE THAT RING-A-DING *THING* A DOSE OF THE *SAME!*

SSAK

NUTS! THAT CREEP'S AN *INSULT* TO US *GENU-WINE* BLUSHIN' BEAUTIES!

AND HERE GOES THE *LAST* OF THEM!

WE ALL GOT OFF PRETTY *EASY* THIS TIME!

HEY! YOU GOT *HALAVAH* IN YOUR HEAD, OR SOMETHIN'?

THEY DON'T EVEN COUNT, BEN!

WADDAYA MEAN *WE* GOT OFF EASY?

THEY'RE THE ONES WHO'RE LUCKY WE DIDN'T TAKE 'EM *APART* 'N SEE WHAT MAKES 'EM *TICK!*

WE'VE ONLY WON A BRIEF *DELAY!*

REED--LOOK!! THERE IN THE *SKY--!*

A MENTAL *ASTRO-IMAGE*--FILLING THE VERY *HEAVENS* ABOVE US!!

IT'S *DAZZLING*--*BLINDING*--MEANT FOR *OUR* EYES ALONE!

IT CAN ONLY BE--*GALACTUS!*

I *AM* GALACTUS!

HEED YOU MY WORDS, MORTALS--

FOR, EVEN PATIENCE SUCH AS *MINE* MAY BE *EXHAUSTED!*

I *HEAR* 'IM--

BUT *HOW??* THERE AINT ANY *SOUND!*

YOU MUST REVEAL THE HIDING PLACE OF MY HERALD--THE SILVER SURFER!

THE HECK WE WILL!

YOU DON'T SCARE US, BIG SHOT!

WE'LL NEVER TURN 'IM IN, HEAR? NEVER!

NO, BEN! DON'T SAY IT!

WASSA-MATTER, STRETCH? TURNIN' CHICKEN?

YOU FOOL! NOW HE'LL THINK WE KNOW!

YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO DEFY GALACTUS!

THEREFORE, YOU MUST REAP THE CONSEQUENCES!

HE'S--FADING AWAY--!

HE'S GONE!--BUT, WHAT DID HE MEAN--ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES?

AWW, WHO CARES? HE WUZ JUST BLUFFIN'!

GALACTUS DOESN'T BLUFF, BEN!

BECAUSE OF YOUR IDIOTIC OUTBURST, THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT WE'RE IN FOR NOW!

HEY! YOU TRYIN' TA TELL ME SOME-THIN'?

WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THE SURFER IS--BUT YOU MADE IT SOUND LIKE WE DO!

WOULDJA TELL HIM IF YA DID KNOW?

OF COURSE NOT!

THEN WHAT'S THE DIFF?

YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND!

WHAT'S TO UNDERSTAND? ALL WE GOTTA DO IS--

HEY! WHAT'S THAT?

IT LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF GIANT METEOR--HEADING THIS WAY!

WORSE THAN THAT--IT'S AN ACTUAL PLANETOID!!

GALACTUS HAS DIVERTED IT FROM ITS COURSE!

IF IT ISN'T STOPPED--IT CAN ATOMIZE HALF THE CONTINENT!

EVEN AS REED RICHARDS SPEAKS--THE FIRST SUDDEN, SHOCKED REALIZATION OF IMPENDING DOOM SWEEPS ACROSS THE NATION--

IT--IT CAN'T BE *REAL*!!

IT'S BLOCKING OUT HALF THE *SKY*! AND IT ISN'T *STOPPING*!

THINGS LIKE *THAT*-- JUST DON'T *HAPPEN*! THEY *CAN'T*!! THEY *CAN'T*!

SEE HOW IT'S DRIFTING *CLOSER*-- EVERY SECOND!

THERE'S *NOTHING* ANYONE CAN DO!

NOTHING!

AND, IN A LUXURIOUS *HOTEL ROOM*, ON NEW YORK'S FASHIONABLE EAST SIDE...

OH, *NO*! I--I MUSTN'T LET *SUE* REALIZE-- WHAT'S *OUT* THERE!

CRYSTAL, DEAR-- WHAT'S ALL THAT *NOISE* IN THE STREET?

WHAT'S *HAPPENING* OUTSIDE?

EVERYTHING SEEMS SO *MUFFLED* THRU THE WINDOW!

IT'S *NOTHING*, SUE! JUST SOME SORT OF *PROTEST* DEMONSTRATION! NOW, TRY TO GET SOME *SLEEP*--!

FOR A MOMENT I FEARED IT MIGHT BE--SOME TERRIBLE NEW *MENACE*!

OH, CRYS--WHEN MY *BABY* IS BORN--I DON'T WANT IT TO LIVE WITH *DANGER*-- AS *WE* DO!

IT WAS--THE MOST *DIFFICULT* THING--I'VE EVER *DONE!*

--PRETENDING THAT EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT--WHEN A *NIGHTMARE* IS COMING TO LIFE--JUST OUTSIDE OUR *WINDOW!*

CAN IT INVOLVE--*JOHNNY*--AND THE OTHERS?

WHERE *ARE* THEY? WHAT'S *HAPPENING* TO THEM?

BUT, PERHAPS IT'S BEST THAT CRYSTAL DOESN'T *KNOW*--

IT LOOKS LIKE YA CAN REACH OUT'N *TOUCH* IT!

THAT'S BECAUSE OF ITS *SIZE!*

IT'S STILL MANY MILES *AWAY!*

BUT, IT KEEPS GETTING *CLOSER*--!

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF *MINUTES* BEFORE IT--IT--I CAN'T EVEN *SAY* IT!

REED! MY *NOVA FLAME!* MAYBE IF I REACH *PEAK INTENSITY*--?

NO USE, JOHNNY! IT'S FAR TOO *BIG*--AND FAR TOO *CLOSE!*

BUT, WE'VE *GOT* TO DO *SOMETHING*--*ANYTHING!*

WE *WILL,* LAD! WE *WILL!*

IS *THAT* ALL YOU CAN DO? YOU CAN'T MAKE IT GO 'WAY--BY SHUTTING YOUR *EYES!*

QUIET!!

IF I THINK *HARD* ENOUGH--THOUGHT WAVES HAVE AN *INFINITE* RANGE--!

THOUGHT WAVES?!?!

OUR ONE *CHANCE*--OUR ONE LONE, OUTSIDE *HOPE*--LIES IN THE INCALCULABLE *POWER* OF GALACTUS!

SINCE HE POSSESSES THE CAPACITY *TO TRANSMIT* HIS THOUGHTS THRU IMMEASURABLE DISTANCES--

IT STANDS TO REASON THAT HE CAN ALSO *RECEIVE* MENTAL IMPULSES IN THE SAME MANNER!

HEAR ME, GALACTUS! WE WILL *FIND* THE SILVER SURFER FOR YOU! I *SWEAR* IT!

ALL WE NEED IS--*TIME!*

I HAVE NO WISH TO *DESTROY* YOUR HELPLESS EARTH!

BUT, YOU MUST BE *SWIFT!* MY HUNGER GROWS *UNENDURABLE!*

THUS, THE PLANETOID IS *GONE!*

ALL I NEED DO IS RETURN TO MY *LABORA-TORY--!*

THEN RETURN YOU *SHALL!*

WE'RE *BACK!* HE INVERTED A *DIMENSIONAL SEQUENCE* WITH A SINGLE *THOUGHT!*

NEVER MIND THE DOUBLE-TALK! WOTTA WE DO *NOW?*

REED! WE'RE STILL *NOWHERE!*

WE'LL *NEVER* FIND THE SURFER!

WE *WILL--* IF WE DON'T *PANIC!*

NOW *THINK,* JOHNNY--*THINK!* WHEN YOU LAST *SAW* THE SILVER SURFER-- *WHERE WAS* HE?

RIGHT *HERE*--IN THE *LAB!* YOU *KNOW* THAT!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I *WANT!* *PIN-POINT* IT, MAN--THE *EXACT SPOT!*

I'M NOT SURE! I CAN'T *REMEMBER!*

YOU *MUST* REMEMBER!

C'MON, JUNIOR! *YOU* CAN DO IT!

WAIT A MINUTE! THE *MICROSCOPE!*

HE WAS *HERE*-- LOOKING AT YOUR *NOTES!*

I *THOUGHT* SO! IT *HAD* TO BE THE ANSWER!

WHEN HE MUTTERED SOMETHING ABOUT "*WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS*", I KNEW HE *MUST* HAVE FOUND MY LATEST EXPERI-MENT!

WHAT EXPERIMENT? HOW'S ABOUT CLUIN' A FELLA *IN?*

NO *TIME* FOR THAT NOW, BEN!

THE POINT IS, I *KNOW* WHERE THE SURFER IS TO BE FOUND!

CLICK!

YA MEAN HE'S HIDIN' INSIDE'A *THERE?*

NO, OLD FRIEND--HE'S TAKEN ONE OF THE MOST *DANGEROUS JOURNEYS* OF ALL TIME--

--AND NOW, IT'S *OUR* TURN--TO *FOLLOW* HIM!

NEXT: **THE WORLD WITHIN!**

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE

MARVEL™ COMICS GROUP

12¢ IND. | 76 JULY

...STRANDED IN SUB-ATOMICA!

THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE IS IMPERILLED WHILE THE BATTLING F.F. ARE--

"STRANDED IN SUB-ATOMICA!"

NOW KNOW YE THIS:

MIGHTY **GALACTUS**, THE PLANET DESTROYER, HAS THREATENED TO **ANNIHILATE ALL OF EARTH** UNLESS HIS FORMER HERALD, THE MISSING **SILVER SURFER**, CAN BE FOUND!

ONLY **MR. FANTASTIC** REALIZES WHERE THE SURFER HAS GONE! AND SO, HE AND HIS TWO GRIM, SUPER-POWERED ALLIES PREPARE TO **FOLLOW** THEIR QUARRY--ON ONE OF THE MOST **INCREDIBLE JOURNEYS** OF ALL TIME--!

REED! IF WE DON'T BRING THE SURFER **BACK** SOON ENOUGH--

--THERE WON'T BE ANY EARTH **LEFT** FOR HIM TO **RETURN** TO!

RELAX, JUNIOR! WE'LL **GIT** 'IM!

THE OL' **FF** AINT NEVER FUMBLED **YET!**

FASTEN YOUR **SAFETY BELTS!**

ALL UNITS ARE **GO!**

WELL, **HARDLY** EVER, ANYHOW!

ANOTHER MIGHTY MARVEL MASTERWORK BY:

STAN (THE MAN) **LEE** and **JACK** (KING) **KIRBY**

EMBELLISHMENT BY: **JOE SINNOTT**

LETTERING BY: **ARTIE SIMEK**

MICRO-WORLD ROAD MAPS BY: **FORBUSH**

GIRD YOUR IMAGINATION, LUCKY ONE! FOR, YOU ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS THE MIND-STAGGERING **RETURN** OF ONE OF THE STRANGEST, MOST STARTLING **ARCH-FIENDS** IN VILLAINDOM--!

HEY, STRETCH--YOU SURE YA AINT PUTTIN' US *ON*?

THIS CONTRAPTION AINT GOT NO *WHEELS*, OR *WINGS*, OR *NOTHIN'*!

HOW IN BLAZES IS IT GONNA *TAKE* US ANYWHERE?

YOU'LL *SEE*, OLD FRIEND!

ACTUALLY, THIS *REDUCTA-CRAFT* WAS BUILT WITH *ONE* SINGLE PURPOSE IN MIND--

TO TAKE US THRU THE *EYE OF A NEEDLE!*

NUTS! WHERE YA GONNA FIND A *NEEDLE* BIG ENUFF FER *US*?

ANYWHERE--ONCE THE *REDUCING CYCLE* IS PUT INTO MOTION--LIKE *NOW!*

HEY! WHAT'S COMIN' *OFF*?

I FEEL LIKE-- I'M *SQUEEZIN' UP*--INSIDE'A MYSELF!

HANG ON! WE'RE UNDER WAY!

SHOOSH!

THAT'S AS GOOD A DESCRIPTION AS *ANY*, BEN!

--EXCEPT THE ENTIRE *REDUCTA-CRAFT* IS SQUEEZING DOWN *WITH* US!

WHY DON'T YOU TWO STOP TALKING AND *ENJOY* IT?

IT'S GOT RIDING A *ROLLER COASTER* BEAT ALL HOLLOW!

AND *NOW*--SINCE WE'VE ACHIEVED NECESSARY *SHRINKAGE*--WE'RE READY TO *TAKE OFF!*

KNOW SOMETHIN' EGGHEAD? I ALWAYS *FIGGERED* YA'D POP YER CORK!

BUT DID IT HAVETA BE WITH *US* ALONG?

QUIET, BEN!

I'VE GOT TO *CONCENTRATE* NOW! THE *NEXT* PHASE OF SHRINKAGE IS EVEN *MORE CRITICAL!*

NEXT PHASE?

HOW SMALL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO *GET*, REED?

SMALL ENOUGH TO ENTER--

THE *MICRO-WORLD!*

MEANWHILE, AT THE EAST SIDE HOTEL SUITE WHERE **SUE RICHARDS** AWAITS THE ARRIVAL OF HER FIRST **BABY**--

YOUR CONDITION IS PERFECTLY **FINE**, YOUNG LADY!

JUST GET PLENTY OF **REST**--AND **CALL** IF YOU NEED ME!

ALTHOUGH I MUST ADMIT **ONE** THING--

I'M SURPRISED AT YOUR **HUSBAND**--NOT **BEING** HERE WHEN THE TIME IS SO **NEAR**!

HE **WILL** BE HERE--I **KNOW** IT!

I **HOPE** SO, MY DEAR!

AT ANY RATE, TRY NOT TO LET THOSE TERRIBLE **NEWS STORIES** UPSET YOU!

HE'S PROBABLY SPEEDING TO MY SIDE RIGHT **NOW**!

NEWS STORIES--??

CRYSTAL--WHAT DID HE **MEAN**?

YOU HAVEN'T SHOWN ME A **PAPER**--OR PLAYED THE **RADIO**--IN DAYS!

WHAT ARE YOU **KEEPING** FROM ME?

HOW CAN I **TELL** HER--ABOUT THAT **PLANETOID**--WHICH APPEARED OUT OF **NOWHERE** AND ALMOST DESTROYED THE EARTH?

SHE'LL SUSPECT THAT IT MUST SOMEHOW CONCERN THE **FANTASTIC FOUR**!

AND I **PROMISED** REED--AND JOHNNY--THAT I'D DO WHATEVER I COULD TO KEEP HER FROM **WORRYING**!

IT'S **NOTHING**, SUE! HE MUST HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO THE USUAL **WAR NEWS** FROM OVERSEAS!

YOU CAN'T **DECEIVE** ME, DEAR! I **KNOW** YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING!

PLEASE, SUE--PLEASE DON'T **ASK** ME!

IN **ANY** EVENT, THERE'S NOTHING YOU--OR I--OR **ANYONE** CAN DO NOW!

I **KNEW** IT! THE BOYS ARE IN **TROUBLE**--JUST WHEN I'M POWERLESS TO **HELP**!

NO! DON'T **SAY** IT! YOU MUSTN'T EVEN **THINK** IT!

IF ANYTHING SHOULD **HAPPEN**--NOW--WITH THE **BABY** ABOUT TO BE BORN--

THEY'LL BE ALL RIGHT--THEY **HAVE** TO BE!

AND, WELL MAY WE HOPE-- FOR *EVERYONE'S* SAKE-- THAT CRYSTAL'S IMPASSIONED WORDS--ARE *TRUE!*

JUST TELL ME *ONE* THING, STRETCHO--

WHAT'S MAKIN' THIS NUTTY SHIP *FLY?*

IT'S PROPELLED BY THE SPEED OF ITS OWN *SHRINKAGE,* BEN--

JUST AS A *BALLOON* MOVES QUICKLY WHEN THE *AIR* IS EXPELLED!

OH WELL, ASK A DOPEY *QUESTION,* AND--*HEY!* GIT US *OUTTA* HERE!

WE'RE SHRINKIN' RIGHT INTO THE BLOB OF *CHEMICAL STAIN* THAT WUZ ON THAT MICRO-SCOPE SLIDE!

I *KNOW* IT! THAT'S THE WHOLE *IDEA!*

THIS IS THE LOGICAL COURSE THE *SURFER* WOULD HAVE TAKEN-- AND WE'VE GOT TO *FOLLOW* HIM!

THE *OBJECTS* YOU SEE SPEEDING *PAST* US ARE AN ENDLESS STREAM OF *MOLECULES!*

AT OUR PRESENT RATE OF SPEED, WE'RE ABOUT TO BECOME --THE WORLD'S FIRST HUMAN *MICRONAUTS!*

THE *SILVER SURFER* TOOK THIS ROUTE AFTER READING YOUR *NOTES,* REED!

BUT, WHAT MADE YOU EVER *WORK* ON SUCH AN EXPERIMENT IN THE *FIRST* PLACE? WHAT WERE YOU *AFTER?*

THINK *BACK,* JOHNNY! CAN'T YOU *GUESS?*

-*SHEESH!*- ARE WE SUPPOSEDTA PLAY *20 QUESTIONS* AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

HOW'S ABOUT GIVIN' A *STRAIGHT ANSWER--* JUST FER *ONCE?*

DON'T YOU REMEMBER WHEN WE FOUGHT THE *PSYCHO-MAN*--THE MICROSCOPIC MENACE FROM *SUB-ATOMICA*?*

I'VE ALWAYS FEARED THE DAY HE MIGHT *RETURN*--TO ENDANGER US *ANEW*!

THEN WE WOULD HAVE MADE THIS JOURNEY SOMETIME *ANYWAY*--

EVEN IF WE DIDN'T *HAVE* TO FIND THE SILVER SURFER?

RIGHT! OR ELSE--WE COULD NEVER *BREATHE EASY*!

*IF *YOU'VE* FORGOTTEN ALSO, IT HAPPENED IN THE *FF SPECIAL, 1967*! --SHARE-A-SECRET STAN.

BUT *NOW*--OUR FIRST JOB IS TO FIND THE *SURFER* --BEFORE THE PATIENCE OF *GALACTUS* RUNS OUT!

ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, THIS IS THE *ONLY* COURSE HE COULD HAVE-- *HOLD IT*!!

I'M *GETTING* SOMETHING ON THE *MICRO-SCANNER*!

WE'VE *FOUND* HIM! HE'S DIRECTLY *AHEAD* OF US!

OKAY! OKAY! LET'S *GRAB* 'IM AND SKEEDADDLE BACK HOME--WHILE WE STILL *CAN*!

IT WON'T BE THAT *EASY*! *LOOK*! LOOK AT HIS BLINDING *SPEED*!

HE THINKS WE WANT TO *TRAP* HIM!

HE WON'T *LET* HIMSELF BE CAUGHT!

HE'S START-ING TO WHIZ PAST US *NOW*!

LOOK OUT!

REED WAS *RIGHT*!

CATCHING THAT LIVING *METEOR* IS GONNA BE THE *TOUGHEST* JOB WE'VE EVER TACKLED!

BUT IF WE *DON'T* BRING HIM BACK--*GALACTUS* WILL ATTACK--AND THE EARTH IS *DOOMED*!

JUST GIT ME WITHIN *CLOBBERIN'* RANGE 'N YER TROUBLES'LL BE *OVER*!

IT'LL TAKE *MORE* THAN YOUR *STRENGTH* TO GET US OUT OF *THIS* ONE, BEN!

WE'D BETTER START *PRAYING*-- FOR A *MIRACLE*!

AT *LAST* I HAVE THE FREEDOM OF AN UNEXPLORED *UNIVERSE* IN WHICH TO SOAR!

NO *LONGER* AM I ETERNALLY *EXILED* UPON THE TINY PLANET *EARTH!*

ONCE *MORE* THE SILVER SURFER IS *FREE* AND *UNFETTERED*-- A BROTHER TO THE *WINDS OF SPACE!*

NEVER WILL I BE TRAPPED --NEVER WILL I BE CONFINED *AGAIN!*

AT LAST --I AM FREE!

BUT *NOW*-- THE *FANTASTIC FOUR* RETURN --TO *PURSUE* ME AGAIN!

THEY *ATTACK* --STRIKING ME WITH A SUDDEN *STUN BLAST!*

ARE THEY *UNWITTING* ENOUGH TO THINK SO *PUNY* AN ATTACK CAN AFFECT THE *SILVER SURFER?*

HAVE THEY *FORGOTTEN* THAT I HAVE BEEN BUFFETTED BY THE MIGHTIEST OF *METEOR SWARMS*--

--WITHOUT SO MUCH AS *SLACKENING* MY SPEED!

I *KNEW* THE STUN BLAST WOULDN'T *STOP* HIM!

BUT, AT LEAST WE'VE MADE HIM *AWARE* THAT WE WANT TO ESTABLISH *CONTACT!*

IF ONLY WE COULD LET HIM *KNOW*--IT'S A MATTER OF *LIFE AND DEATH!*

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF--ALL *MANKIND!*

REED--THERE'S *ONE* THING I DON'T GET--

THIS WHOLE WORLD LOOKS *DEAD!* WHERE'S EVERYONE *ELSE?*

THIS IS ONLY ONE LONE *PLANETOID,* JOHNNY--IN A LIMITLESS *UNIVERSE!*

WE STILL HAVE *MUCH* TO SEE!

LOOK! THIS MAY BE OUR *CHANCE!*

HE'S *LANDING!*

PERHAPS HE WANTS TO *COMMUNICATE* --AT LAST!

I'LL FLAME ON!

'N I AIN'T GONNA BE FAR BEHIND--WITH A FISTFULL'A KNUCKLES!

BY FLYING THERE, I CAN REACH HIM FIRST!

NO! JOHNNY--BEN--HOLD IT! YOU'LL SCARE HIM OFF!

SEE? HE'S CREATING A COSMIC PRO-TECTION SHIELD AGAINST US ALREADY!

NO SHIELD IS GONNA STOP ME NOW!

I'LL MELT IT DOWN AROUND HIM LIKE A SOGGY FROZEN CUSTARD!

THOUGH I NO LONGER POSSESS THE LIMITLESS POWERS OF THE COSMOS--

STILL AM I THE SILVER SURFER!

THAT'S OKAY WITH ME! JUST STAY WHERE YOU ARE--!

'CAUSE WE HAVEN'T TIME TO KID AROUND!

I SHALL NOT MOVE-- I PROMISE YOU THAT!

FOR, WITHIN MY COSMIC SHIELD --I AM TOTALLY INVIOLATE!

HOW ABOUT THAT? HE AIN'T EVEN SINGED!

FLAME OFF, JOHNNY! IT'S NO USE!

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN!

OUTTA THE WAY, KIDDIES!

NEVER SEND A BOY TA DO A MAN'S JOB!

DON'T, BEN! IT'S A WASTE OF TIME! YOU'RE UP AGAINST UNDILUTED COSMIC POWER!

OKAY, BIG SHOT! YOU GOT A BETTER IDEA?

--NO! I HAVEN'T!

THEN CLAM UP-- 'N LEMME CLOBBER THE BUM!

LIKE THIS!

I'LL START A BLASTED EARTH-QUAKE ALL AROUND 'IM--!

BUT--WHAT WILL YOU GAIN BY IT?

KA-BOOM!

IT'S SIMPLE! NOW I GOT ME SOME READY-MADE HUNKS'A GEOGRAPHY TO LIFT UP 'N CLOMP 'IM WITH!

WATCH IT, BEN! HE'S STARTING TO DISSOLVE HIS SHIELD!

SO WHAT? THAT'S WHAT WE WANTED, AINT IT?

NO! NOT THE WAY HE'S DOING IT!

ENOUGH!

I WILL NOT STAND IDLY BY AND ALLOW MYSELF TO BE UNJUSTLY ATTACKED!

HEADS UP, BEN.!
I'LL INTERCEPT THE BOARD AS BEST I CAN--!
UNHHH!
THANKS, THIN MAN.! THAT WOULD'A DUSTED MY CREW-CUT FOR SURE!
STAND CLEAR!
THE MOMENTUM IS SPINNING IT AROUND!
I'M BEING HAMSTRUNG BY MY OWN RIGHT ARM!
A THING LIKE THAT CAN GIVE YA SOME CHARLIE HORSE!
I'LL GITCHA OUTTA IT IN NO TIME!
LET ME! I CAN DO IT FASTER!
THIS TIME I'M GONNA CHARCOAL BROIL THAT CRUMMY BOARD OF HIS!
DON'T TRY IT, JOHNNY!
IT'S NOT MADE OF ORDINARY WOOD!
WE'VE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT MIGHT HAP-- JOHNNY!
FLIST!
YOU UNTHINKING FOOL!
CAN A MERE BURST OF EARTHLY FLAME AFFECT AN OBJECT WHICH HAS SKIRTED THE SURFACE OF A THOUSAND BLAZING SUNS?!!
ZOOM

NOW LET MY BOARD *RETURN* TO ME!

FOR I HAVE *TARRIED* LONG ENOUGH!

AN UNKNOWN *UNIVERSE* UNFOLDS BEFORE ME--

AND I MUST *ANSWER* ITS SILENT SUMMONS!

MY EVERY *SENSE* INFORMS ME THAT *INTELLIGENT LIFE* EXISTS WITHIN THIS COSMOS!

THUS, I HAVE A *GOAL*-- FOR I MUST *FIND* IT!

BUT, WITHIN A MATTER OF *SECONDS*, IT IS THE *SURFER* WHO IS, FOUND--!

BEHIND ME--!

WHAT MANNER OF VESSEL IS *THAT*?

SINCE WE *HATE* TO LEAVE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS, LET US REVEAL THAT THE GLISTENING GLADIATOR HAS BEEN DISCOVERED BY A FLYING ROBOTIC *PROBE-SHIP*, CONTROLLED FROM AFAR BY THE MASTER SCIENTIST OF *SUB-ATOMICA*--THE SUPREMELY POWERFUL, TOTALLY MERCILESS MASTER OF THE MICRO-WORLD--THE EMOTIONLESS ENTITY KNOWN AS--*PSYCHO-MAN!!*

A CREATURE FROM THE *MICRO-WORLD* ABOVE--DARING TO INVADE SUB-ATOMICA!

I MUST LEARN HIS *MISSION* HERE--AND TAKE THE MEASURE OF HIS *POWER!*

THOUGH *OUR* SCIENCE IS FAR MORE ADVANCED THAN *THEIRS*--

MY FATEFUL ENCOUNTER WITH THE *FANTASTIC FOUR* HAD TAUGHT ME *NEVER* TO COMMIT THE FOOLHARDY OFFENSE OF *UNDERESTIMATING* THEM!

THEREFORE, I MUST HAVE HIM *BROUGHT* TO ME--

--AS A HELPLESS, CRUSHED, AND DESPAIRING *CAPTIVE!*

AND *ONE* THERE IS WHO CAN *EFFORT-LESSLY* PERFORM SO VITAL A TASK--!

ARISE, MY *INDESTRUCTIBLE ONE!*

YOUR MASTER HAS *NEED* OF YOU ONCE MORE!

JOURNEY FOURTH-- AND *FIND* THE ONE I SEEK!

LET *NOTHING* KEEP YOU FROM YOUR GOAL!

*M*EANWHILE, THREE WEARY, BATTERED FIGURES TAKE A *BREATHER,* AS THEY DESPERATELY PONDER THEIR NEXT MOVE--

WELL, IF WE *HADDA* TAKE OUR LUMPS, I'M GLAD NO ONE WUZ AROUND TA *SEE* IT!

FORGET YOUR *PRIDE,* BEN!

REMEMBER, THE FATE OF *EARTH* IS STILL AT STAKE!

AND A FAT LOT *WE'RE* DOING ABOUT IT!

I'LL TAKE THE BLAME THIS TIME!

AWW, *FERGET* IT, PAL! WE AINT HANDIN' OUT *REPORT CARDS* AROUND HERE!

I WAS SO ANXIOUS TO *FIND* THE SURFER--I DIDN'T WORK OUT A PLAN FOR *DEALING* WITH HIM!

THE *BIG* THING IS--WHAT DO WE DO *NEXT,* REED?

WE GO AFTER HIM *AGAIN!* AND *THIS* TIME-- WE *GET* HIM!

REMEMBER, THE FATE OF *TWO BILLION LIVING SOULS* MAY DEPEND UPON OUR SUCCESS--OR FAILURE!

IT *ALSO* INCLUDES *CRYSTAL*-- AND *ALICIA*--

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT-- *KNOCK IT OFF*, MISTER!

THAT INCLUDES MY WIFE, *SUE*-- AND OUR UNBORN *BABY!*

WE DON'T NEED A *PEP TALK* TO GO AFTER THAT JOKER--

YOU AWREADY *MADE* YER POINT--SO LET'S GIT *MOVIN'!*

BEN'S *RIGHT*, REED!

WE *KNOW* HOW SERIOUS IT IS!

FORGIVE ME, BOTH OF YOU! I DIDN'T MEAN TO-- *WAIT!*

WE'RE PICKING UP AN *IMAGE* NOW!

HEY, AINT *THAT* A HUNK'A *LUCK!*

NOW, IF WE CAN GIT 'IM BACK TO *GALACTUS* IN TIME--

UH OH! *HOLD IT!* --*THAT* AINT THE *SURFER!*

I *KNOW* IT, BEN!

THERE HE *IS*-- COMING IN AT *NINE O'CLOCK*--!

AND SO, A FICKLE *FATE* STEPS IN, AS THE PSYCHO-MAN'S *INDESTRUCTIBLE* MISTAKES THE *REDUCTA-CRAFT* FOR HIS INTENDED QUARRY--!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT *IS*--

BUT IT SURE DOESN'T COME FROM THE *WELCOME WAGON!*

LOOK OUT! HE'S HEADING RIGHT *FOR* US!

DID YOU SEE *THAT?*

HE SLAMMED RIGHT *INTO* THE SHIP-- WITHOUT EVEN *FEEL-ING* IT!

HE'S TRYING TO *SMASH* HIS WAY RIGHT *TO* US!

GIT THE *ESCAPE HATCH* OPEN, STRETCH! *I'LL* GIT RIDDA HIM!

BUT, BEN--ANYONE WHO COULD ABSORB THE *IMPACT* HE JUST TOOK--WITHOUT BAT-TING AN EYE--!

EVEN *YOUR* STRENGTH CAN'T MATCH *HIS!*

ANYONE EVER TELL YA YOU *TALK* TOO MUCH?

GIT *LOST,* MAC! *NO* HITCH-HIKERS!

BOK

WASSAMATTER? AINTCHA GOT ENOUGH SENSE TA *FALL DOWN* WHEN YA BEEN *CLOBBERED?*

BOY! STRETCHO COULD SURE TAKE SOME *CLAM UP* LESSONS FROM YA!

BEN! BREAK *AWAY!* YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *UP* AGAINST!

I GOT *NEWS* FOR YA--

I'M FINDIN' *OUT--* REAL *FAST!*

SKRAK

HANG ON JOHNNY! WE'VE GOT TO *LAND*-- AND HELP BEN!

I *WARNED* HIM NOT TO TACKLE SOMETHING HE COULDN'T *HANDLE!*

THERE AINT *NOTHIN'* I CAN'T HANDLE!

THE BLASTED *GRAVITY* IN THIS PLACE IS *HEAVIER* THAN WHERE *WE* COME FROM--

SO I JUST CAN'T *MOVE* AS FAST!

BUT I'LL GIT *USED* TO IT SOON-- AND *THEN* WAIT--!

BEN IS THINKING OF IT AS A *PERSONAL CHALLENGE!*

HE'S *FORGOTTEN* HOW MUCH *DEPENDS* UPON OUR REACHING THE *SURFER* IN TIME!

ALSO, HE FAILED TO REALIZE HE'S NOT FIGHTING A FELLOW *HUMAN!*

THAT LIVING, BREATHING *MURDER MACHINE* IS, IN REALITY, MERELY AN *INDESTRUCTIBLE ANDROID!*

MIGHTY *PROUD* OF YERSELF, AINTCHA?

TOSSIN' AROUND A GUY WHO'S STILL GOTTA ADJUST TO THIS CRUMMY *GRAVITY* O' YOURS!

BUT ENJOY IT WHILE YA *CAN*, TWINKLETOES-- 'CAUSE IT AINT GONNA LAST *FOREVER!*

GET *READY*, JOHNNY-- I FOUND A SPOT TO BRING HER *DOWN!*

HURRY, REED! I DON'T SEE HOW POOR BEN CAN *TAKE* MUCH MORE PUNISHMENT!

THERE! THAT DOES IT! I WAS ABLE TO MAKE A SOFT LANDING!

AND JUST IN TIME! BEN IS STUNNED--BEING PLACED IN SOME SORT OF VOLCANIC CREVICE!

YOU DEACTIVATE THE CONTROLS, REED! I'M GOING AFTER HIM!

DON'T FLAME ON, JOHNNY!

THE WHOLE AREA IS VOLCANIC! YOU COULD START A CHAIN REACTION THAT WOULD KILL US ALL!

BUT-- I'VE GOTTA DO SOME-THING!

LOOK! THE ANDROID STEPPED BACK--HE'S JUST WATCH-ING--WAITING --BUT FOR WHAT?

I GOT ME A PRETTY GOOD HUNCH, JUNIOR!

FROM THE WAY THIS JOINT'S STARTIN' TO SIZZLE--

HE'S WAITIN' FER IT TO GO OFF--

--LIKE A SKY-ROCKET!

BEN!!

REED! I WAITED TOO LONG! HE'S HURT!

DON'T WORRY 'BOUT ME--!

DON'T LET THAT FROZEN-FACED FINK TAKE A POWDER-- TILL I GIT MY PAWS ON 'IM!

YOU'VE *DONE* YOUR SHARE, OLD FRIEND!

NOW IT'S UP TO *US!*

I'VE *GOTTA* USE MY FLAME, REED! BUT I'LL *CONCENTRATE* IT JUST IN *ONE* SPOT!

WE'LL SEE IF HE CAN *TAKE* IT AS GOOD AS HE DISHES IT *OUT!*

FOR THE LUVVA *MIKE!* YOU WERE *RIGHT* ABOUT HIM--

HE *MUST* BE *INDESTRUC-TIBLE!*

HE JUST *STANDS* THERE-- LIKE NOTHING'S *HAPPEN-ING!*

BUT LET'S SEE HOW HE REACTS TO A SALVO OF *THERMO-BLASTS!*

REED! THEY'RE PASSING RIGHT *THRU* HIM--

NOTHING CAN HURT HIM!

NOTHING CAN *STOP* HIM! --*NOTHING*

AND NOW-- HE'S ABOUT TO *ATTACK* AGAIN!

BUT WE *CAN'T* LET HIM STOP US! *WE HAVE TO FIND THE SURFER!*

BEFORE OUR *TIME* RUNS OUT!

BUT, IN *ANOTHER* WORLD--A FAR *LARGER* WORLD--IT SEEMS THAT TIME *ALREADY* HAS RUN OUT--!

I AM ABLE TO WAIT--*NO LONGER!*

MY COSMIC *HUNGER* HAS BECOME *UNENDURABLE!*

THOUGH I HAVE NO WISH TO INFLICT PHYSICAL *HARM* UPON LESSER BEINGS--

ONLY BY DRAINING THE *LIVING ENERGY* OF EARTH CAN *GALACTUS* SURVIVE!

AND SURVIVE I *MUST!*

THE *SILVER SURFER* MIGHT HAVE FOUND ME *ANOTHER* PLANET--

BUT, HE HAS CHOSEN TO *FORSAKE* ME!

LET THE FATEFUL LEVER *RISE!*

WHEN IT REACHES THE *CRITICAL POINT,* EARTH WILL BE BATHED IN A TORRENT OF *ANTI-MATTER* RAYS--

AND GALACTUS SHALL *HUNGER*-- NO MORE!

"I *GRIEVE* FOR THE HUMANS WHO MUST SUMMARILY *PERISH*--BUT, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY! THOSE WHO WENT IN SEARCH OF MY ONCE-AND-FORMER *HERALD,* HAVE MOST DISMALLY *FAILED*--!

--AND THE *PRICE* OF THAT FAILURE MUST NEEDS BE--*THE LIFE OF A PLANET!*"

STILL--*FAILURE* IS BUT A SINGLE *WORD*-- FAR BETTER SUITED TO *OTHERS* THAN TO THOSE WHO *NEVER SURRENDER*--!

INTO THE SHIP --*BOTH* OF YOU!

I'LL HOLD HIM OFF WHILE YOU GO AFTER THE *SURFER*!

NO! WE CAN'T *LEAVE* YOU-- YOU WON'T HAVE A *CHANCE*!

MEBBE YOU AINT SO *MUCH*, BUT NO MISERABLE *ANDROID'S* GONNA FLATTEN YA WHILE *I'M* AROUND!

FOR THE LOVE OF *HEAVEN*-- GET *GOING*!

YOU'VE *GOT* TO FIND HIM!

MY LIFE MEANS *NOTHING*! BUT ONLY THE *SURFER* CAN SAVE *MANKIND*!

NOW THERE'S *NO* TURNING BACK!

IF YOU *MAKE* IT-- TELL SUE--MY LAST THOUGHTS WERE OF *HER*--AND OF--THE *BABY*!

WHAT *HAPPENED*?!!

I HURTLED *THRU* HIM--AS THOUGH HE'S--SUDDENLY *FADING AWAY*!

HE *IS* FADING--

VANISHING --RIGHT BEFORE OUR *EYES*!

CAREFUL! IT MAY BE-- A *TRICK*!

IT IS *NO TRICK!*

THE *SURFER!* HE'S *COME BACK!*

AFTER *ELUDING* YOU, I *RETURNED*--TO *AMUSE* MYSELF AT YOUR FRUSTRATION!

I'M BETTIN' YA GO TO *FUNERALS* --FER *LAUGHS!*

BUT THEN-- AFTER *OVER-HEARING* THE CRISIS THAT *BROUGHT* YOU HERE--

AFTER *WITNESSING* YOUR INDOMITABLE *GALLANTRY*--

I REALIZED WHERE THE *DUTY* OF THE *SILVER SURFER* LIES!

WELL, FER THE LUVVA AUNT PETUNIA--HE'S REALLY GONNA *HELP* US!

BUT, YA BETTER *HURRY,* SKIN-HEAD--WE FIGGER TIME'S NEARLY *RUN OUT!*

BEN! REED! HAVE YOU STOPPED TO *THINK*--WHAT THIS MEANS? --WHAT A *SACRIFICE* THE SURFER WILL BE MAKING?!!

HE'LL BE GIV-ING UP THAT WHICH IS MOST *PRECIOUS* TO HIM--

HIS SKY-BORN *FREEDOM*--

IN ORDER TO SAVE *MANKIND!*

FOR, WHEN YOU AGAIN REJOIN THE RAGING *GALACTUS*--THERE'S NO TELLING *WHAT* YOUR FATE WILL BE!

NO MATTER! I MUST *TAKE* THAT CHANCE!

AND NOW-- *STAND CLEAR!* I LEAVE YOU *AGAIN*-- PERHAPS FOR THE *LAST TIME!*

HE'S *GONE!*

HURRY, REED --LET'S GET IN THE SHIP AND *FOLLOW* HIM!

NO! THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN *DO*--UP THERE!

BUT, SO LONG AS *PSYCHO-MAN* STILL LIVES--OUR WORK IS *UNFINISHED* HERE!

WE MAY *NEVER* HAVE A CHANCE TO RETURN HERE *AGAIN!*

SO WE'LL SET THE CONTROLS TO *MAXIMUM PENETRA-TION--!*

AND NOW--IT WILL BE THE *THREE OF US*--AGAINST THE TOTAL FORCES OF *SUB-ATOMICA!*

NEXT ISSUE:

THE POWER OF PSYCHO MAN

AS WE WONDER--

SHALL EARTH ENDURE?

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

12¢ IND. | 77 AUG

...SHALL EARTH ENDURE?

THE FABULOUS F.F. MUST FIGHT TO THE FINISH AS THEY DESPERATELY ASK...

SHALL EARTH ENDURE?

ANOTHER STAN (THE MAN) LEE AND JACK (KING) KIRBY COSMIC CREATION!

EMBELLISHED BY: JOE SINNOTT

LETTERED BY: SAM ROSEN

NIL NISI OPTIMUS!

FEATURING: THE MENTALLY-INDUCED POWER OF PSYCHO-MAN!

HEY, STRETCH! NOW THAT YA TALKED US INTO *STAYIN'* HERE IN THE MICRO-WORLD TO FIGHT *PSYCHO-MAN*...

HOW IN THE NAME'A *AUNT PETUNIA* ARE WE GONNA *FIND* 'IM?

WE WON'T *HAVE* TO, BEN!

I'M BETTING THAT *HE* FINDS *US!*

AND THAT NUTTY *GIZMO* DROPPING DOWN OVER THERE PROBABLY MEANS HE'S ALREADY *FOUND* US!

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

LOOKS LIKE SOME KINDA OVERSIZED *PINBALL MACHINE* TO *ME!*

TAKE A *POKE* AT IT'N SEE IF IT SAYS *TILT!*

THIS IS NO TIME FOR *CLOWNING,* BEN!

WHATEVER FUNCTION THIS *HAS,* YOU CAN BE SURE IT'LL PROVE *DANGER-OUS*...TO *US!*

LOOK! IT'S STARTING TO *GLOW..!*

MAYBE I SHOULD *FLAME ON,* AND SEE HOW IT REACTS TO *FIRE!*

HOLD IT, JOHNNY! REMEMBER...THE *PSYCHO-MAN* IS MASTER OF A SCIENCE WE KNOW *NOTHING* ABOUT!

IT CAN'T DO US MUCH *HARM* IF I *MELT* IT INTO A MOLTEN GLOB!

C'MON, BROTHER-IN-LAW! ANYTHING *YOU* DON'T KNOW DOESN'T *EXIST!*

BUT, THIS IS ANOTHER *WORLD,* PERHAPS GOVERNED BY *DIFFER-ENT* NATURAL LAWS OF...*LOOK OUT!*

HEY! WHAT'S *HAPPENIN'* TO US??

WE'RE BEING *SWEPT UP...* BY THAT *MACHINE!*

WE'RE TRAVELLING THRU SPACE...THRU *MICRO-SPACE...*

--ON AN *ENERGY BEAM* FROM SOME FAR-OFF PLANET!

BUT *HOW?* WHERE ARE WE *GOIN'?*

WHEREVER IT IS...WE'VE *LANDED!*

GLAD YA *TOLD* US! WE'D NEVER'A *GUESSED!*

WE'RE INSIDE SOME SORT OF COMPUTERIZED *MATTER RECEIVER!*

IT TRANSFORMED OUR BODIES INTO BASIC *ELECTRONS* AND THEN *REASSEMBLED* THEM---INSTANTANEOUSLY!

BUT, HOW DID IT *HAPPEN?*

WHO *DID* IT?

SURELY YOU CAN *GUESS* THE ANSWER TO *THAT!*

SINCE YOU WENT TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF FINDING A WAY *INTO* MY MICRO-WORLD---

THE VERY LEAST *PSYCHO-MAN* CAN DO IS WELCOME YOU---IN *PERSON!*

HOWEVER, BEFORE I *DISPOSE* OF YOU--- JUST AS I WOULD DISPOSE OF *ANY* UNWELCOME INTRUDERS IN MY SUB-ATOMIC DOMAIN---

I WILL PROBE YOUR *BRAINS*...FOR ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT EARTHLY SCIENCE...BEFORE I *ATTACK* YOUR UNIVERSE AGAIN!

NOT A *CHANCE*, MADMAN!

THAT'S WHY WE'RE *HERE*...TO MAKE SURE THAT OUR WORLD HAS SEEN THE *LAST* OF YOU!

INDEED? THEN YOU HAVE *WASTED* YOUR JOURNEY!

HEY, DOES THAT SKULL-HEADED SLOB THINK HE CAN GIT COZY WITH THE THREE OF US?

GIMME ROOM, KIDDIES! I'M GONNA SEE WHAT MAKES 'IM TICK!

NO! LET THE TORCH TACKLE HIM FIRST! HIS FLAME AFFORDS MORE PROTECTION!

AS YOU WISH!

IT MATTERS NOT TO ME!

FLAME ON!

HEY! WATCH IT, JUNIOR..!

YER BACK-FIRIN'!

NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL YOU ARE, A SELF-CONTAINED THERMAL BLAST OUGHT TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT!

ENOUGH, JOHNNY!! BACK OFF... BACK OFF!

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS! HE'S PULLED THE SAME TRICK HE DID WHEN WE FOUGHT EACH OTHER BACK ON EARTH!*

AND WHILE WE'RE WASTIN' TIME HERE, FER ALL WE KNOW GALACTUS MIGHT BE TEARIN' OUR WHOLE BLAMED PLANET APART!

USING HIS POWER TO INFLUENCE OUR MINDS, HE MADE US BELIEVE THAT ENCEPHO-PROJECTOR WAS IN REALITY THE MAN WE'RE AFTER!

I'VE BEEN TRYING...NOT TO THINK OF THAT!

WHATEVER HAPPENS ON EARTH...YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO HELP MANKIND AGAIN!

*F.F. SPECIAL '67, REMEMBER? SURE YOU DO! ...SELF-CONFIDENT STAN.

AND, SPEAKING OF *EARTH*, WE LAST SAW THE *SILVER SURFER* HEADING THERE---HOPING TO REACH *GALACTUS* BEFORE HE MADE GOOD HIS AWESOME THREAT---

I HAVE REACHED MY *GOAL* AT LAST!

HERE, IN THE LABORATORY OF *REED RICHARDS*, I WILL ATTAIN MY NORMAL *HEIGHT* IN A MATTER OF SECONDS!

I THOUGHT I *HEARD* SOME--!!

OH! IT'S... THE *SILVER SURFER!*

DO NOT BE *AFRAID!*

I AM HERE TO *AID* THE HUMAN RACE!

HAVE YOU...BEEN IN CONTACT WITH *JOHNNY*... AND THE *OTHERS*??

YOUR MENFOLK ARE *ALIVE*---IN A PLACE WHERE YOU CANNOT *REACH* THEM!

IT'S BEEN LIKE A *NIGHTMARE* FOR MRS. RICHARDS...AND FOR *ME*... BEING HERE ALONE---AND *NOT KNOWING!*

I CAN TELL YOU *NO MORE!*

CRYSTAL! WHO'S *THERE*? WHAT'S *WRONG*? CRYSTAL--!!

DON'T BE ALARMED! IT'S THE *SILVER SURFER!* EVERYTHING IS---ALL RIGHT!

SHE IS IN *BED!* IS MRS. RICHARDS *ILL?*

NO--SHE'S EXPECTING A *BABY!*

SHE INSISTED I MOVE HER *HERE* IN CASE WE HEAR FROM *REEDS RICHARDS!*

SOMETHING'S *HAPPENED* TO HIM... I *KNOW* IT!

YOU MUST NOT *ALARM* YOURSELF...AT A TIME LIKE *THIS!*

BUT MY *HUSBAND*.. HE'S *VANISHED*... WITHOUT A *WORD!* HE'D *NEVER* DO THAT...UNLESS..!

NO! DO NOT *SAY* IT! DO NOT EVEN *THINK* IT!

I CAN REMAIN HERE *NO LONGER!* THERE IS A *TASK* TO BE DONE..!

BUT WHAT OF *REED?* IF YOU *KNOW* ANYTHING ...YOU *MUST* TELL ME..!

DON'T *EXCITE* YOURSELF! *PLEASE..!*

NOTHING I CAN TELL YOU WOULD SET YOUR MIND AT EASE!

THEN I WAS *RIGHT!*

IT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN *FEARING..!*

BUT, THERE IS *ONE* THING I CAN DO..!

I CAN GIVE YOU THE MOST PRECIOUS *GIFT*...THE GIFT OF.. *SLEEP!*

SHE WILL *REST* NOW!

AND I HOPE...FOR THE SAKE OF *MANKIND*...THAT THERE WILL STILL BE AN *EARTH* SPINNING IN ORBIT WHEN SHE *AWAKES!*

IT ALL DEPENDS UPON WHETHER I CAN REACH *GALACTUS*...IN TIME!

A SPLIT-SECOND LATER...

HE IS UP THERE *SOMEWHERE*... AWAITING HIS ONCE-AND-FORMER *HERALD!*

NO MATTER THE DREAD *FATE* I SHALL SUFFER...

I MUST GO TO HIM!

FOR, ONLY BY FINDING *ANOTHER* WORLD... WHOSE *LIFE ENERGY* HE MAY DRAIN...

CAN ALL WHO LIVE UPON THE EARTH...BE *SPARED!*

FOR, WHEN *GALACTUS* FEELS THE PANGS OF *HUNGER*...

NOTHING LESS THAN A *PLANET* CAN SATISFY HIM!

THE LEVER *RISES!*

WITHIN MINUTES, ALL OF *EARTH* SHALL BE BATHED IN A TORRENT OF *ANTI-MATTER RAYS* WHICH... BUT *WAIT!!*

MY *HERALD* APPROACHES!

THE *SILVER SURFER* HAS HEEDED MY SUMMONS *AT LAST!*

BUT, *TIME* IS RUNNING OUT!

I DARE NOT *WAIT* FOR HIM TO REACH ME!

I MUST PROJECT AN *IMAGE* THRU THE INFINITE..!

ONLY SECONDS REMAIN! IF EARTH SHALL SURVIVE... YOU MUST FIND WHAT I SEEK...YOU MUST FIND IT... ***NOW!***

SPARE THEM, GALACTUS!

I SHALL NOT *FAIL* YOU!

WHILE, BACK IN THE MICRO-WORLD...

REED, IF HE CAN MAKE US BELIEVE HE'S *ANYONE*...OR *ANYTHING*...

HOW WILL WE KNOW WHO'S THE *REAL* PSYCHO-MAN?

WE *WON'T*, JOHNNY! WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MEET *EVERY* ATTACK AS IT COMES...AND, KEEP HOPING!

SOME BIG BRAIN *YOU* ARE!

ANY *YANCY STREETER* COULD'A TOLD US *THAT!*

SINCE WE WERE *BROUGHT* HERE BY SOME SORT OF *MATTER RECEIVER*...

WE HAVE TO KEEP SEARCHING FOR ITS *SOURCE!*

LET'S SEE WHAT LIES *AHEAD!*

AT LEAST IT'S SOME-THING TO *DO!*

ANY DOOR SO *STRONGLY* BUILT MUST BE PROTECTING SOMETHING *IMPORTANT!*

MAYBE HE'S GOT HIS OLD *COMIC MAG COLLECTION* INSIDE!

WHATEVER IT *IS*, IT'S *FIRE-RESISTANT!*

MY *FLAME* ISN'T MAKING A *DENT!*

IT AIN'T THAT I'M TRYIN' TO SHOW YA *UP*, HOT-HEAD...

BUT THERE'S *SOME* JOBS THAT NOTHIN' BUT A MESS'A *MUSCLE* CAN HANDLE--!

POW!

LIKE *THIS..!*

YOU MADE A TREMENDOUS *DENT* IN IT, BEN---

BUT IT'S STILL *INTACT!*

SHEESH! SOMETHIN' LIKE ***THAT*** CAN GIVE A GUY A ***COMPLEX!***

I BETTER TAKE ***ANOTHER*** WHACK AT 'ER--!

NO NEED FOR ANY ***FURTHER*** CHILDISH DISPLAY OF STRENGTH!

NOTHING WILL RAISE THAT DOOR... BUT THE SOUND OF MY ***VOICE!***

PSYCHO-MAN!

HE'S ***OPENING*** IT!

AND NOW...I SHALL DEMONSTRATE WHAT ***POWER*** REALLY *IS*..!

GANGWAY!

SPA!

I DUNNO WHAT ***HIT*** ME...

BUT IT MUSTA BEEN A WHOLE BLASTED ***ARMY!***

WORSE THAN ***THAT,*** BEN..!

LOOK!

I AIN'T GOT ***TIME*** TO LOOK!

I GOT ME A LITTLE ***CLOBBERIN'*** TO DO!

BEN... WAIT, YOU FOOL!

HE'S MORE THAN DOUBLED HIS SIZE... AND HIS POWER!

YOU'RE UP AGAINST A GIANT!

NO NEED TO TELL HIM, RICHARDS!

I'LL SEE TO IT THAT HE LEARNS FOR HIMSELF!

UNHHH!!

NOW, AS SOON AS HE STRIKES MR. FANTASTIC, I'LL HAVE ELIMINATED TWO OF YOU WITH A SINGLE BLOW!

STRETCHO... DUCK! DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!!

IT'S ALL RIGHT, OLD FRIEND! WE'RE NOT BEATEN YET..!

.. NOT AS LONG AS MY ELASTIC BODY CAN ABSORB THE IMPACT AND CUSHION THE BLOW!

I'VE GOT TO GIVE THEM TIME TO CATCH THEIR *BREATH!*

IF I CAN *MELT* THE ENTRANCE...THAT'LL HOLD *PSYCHO-MAN* BACK LONG ENOUGH... I *HOPE!*

GOOD WORK, JOHNNY!

JUST WHAT WE *NEED!*

REED, WAS *THAT* THE REAL PSYCHO-MAN, OR...?

NO WAY OF *KNOWING,* LAD...

BUT I *DOUBT* IT!

WHY SHOULD HE JEOPARDIZE HIS *OWN* BODY WHEN HE CAN USE SO MANY *OTHERS?!!*

YAK! YAK! YAK! DON'TCHA EVER *RUN DOWN?*

SKROK!

NO MERE *WALL* CAN STOP *ME!*

IT'S *HIM* AGAIN!

THIS TIME I AIN'T GIVIN' 'IM A *CHANCE* TO PULL ANY-THIN' *CUTE...!*

GERONIMO!

YOU *GOT* HIM, BEN!

YOU SENT HIM *FLYING!!*

BTAM!

STAND BACK, BIG FELLA! LET US HANDLE IT NOW!

NOT A CHANCE, MISTER!

I'M THRU DOIN' ALL THE HEAVY WORK N' LETTIN' SOMEONE ELSE PICK UP THE MARBLES!

BEN!! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! HE'S NOT SOME ORDINARY SUPER-POWERED SPARRING-PARTNER FOR YOU..!

KEEP TALKIN', LOUD-MOUTH! AT LEAST IT KEEPS YER TONSILS AWAKE!

FOOM!

OKAY, BIG MAN! I GUESS YOU'RE REAL PROUD OF YOURSELF NOW!

WELL, I'LL BE A MONKEY'S UNCLE!

YOU DON'T HAVE THE BRAINS TO BE!

I WANTED TO STUDY THAT FIGURE OF PSYCHO-MAN... TO ANALYZE THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR ITS EXISTENCE!

BUT YOUR BIRD-BRAINED TEMPER LOST ME ANOTHER PRECIOUS CHANCE!

HOW'S ABOUT ALL THE TIMES IT SAVED YER BLASTED LIFE?

OR DON'T THAT COUNT?

KNOCK IT OFF, BEN! YOU KNOW REED'S RIGHT!

NUTS! IF YOU GUYS ARE MY FRIENDS.. WHO NEEDS ENEMIES?!!

BUT NOW, LET'S LIFT OUR SIGHTS A BIT...AS WE ZERO IN ON A *GLEAMING FIGURE* SURFING ALONG THE SKYWAYS OF THE ENDLESS COSMOS ...

THAT FLAMING *METEOR* IS WHAT I SEEK..!

I HAVE PURSUED IT HALF-WAY ACROSS THE *GALAXY*...

BUT AT LAST MY MISSION IS *REWARDED!*

SO *POWERFUL* WAS THE IMPACT WHEN IT STRUCK THAT LONG-DEAD PLANET...

THAT IT *BURNED* ITS WAY RIGHT THRU THE *CORE*..!

THUS RELEASING ENOUGH *ENERGY* TO BATHE A *SOLAR SYSTEM!*

NOW *GALACTUS* SHALL HUNGER *NO MORE!*

AND THE HUMANS OF *EARTH* WILL THEN BE *SPARED!*

WELL, THINGS SEEM TO BE LOOKING *UP* A BIT FOR OLD MOTHER EARTH... NOW, IF ONLY WE COULD SAY AS MUCH FOR OUR BEWILDERED LITTLE BUDDIES..!

THAT'S THEM, WALKING SINGLE-FILE ALONG ANOTHER OF JOLLY JACK'S SOMEWHAT SPECTACULAR STREET-SCENES..!

REED, I STILL DON'T *GET* IT!

IN ALL THE TIME WE'VE *BEEN* HERE, WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANOTHER LIVING *BEING*... EXCEPT *PSYCHO-MAN!*

HE MUST HAVE *SOME* CASE OF *BAD BREATH!*

A WHOLE BLASTED *WORLD*... AND HE'S GOT IT ALL TO *HIMSELF!*

WE HAVE TO KEEP *REMEMBER-ING*... HE'S A MASTER OF *EMOTIONAL* AND *CEREBRAL IMAGERY!*

HE CAN MAKE US *IMAGINE* ALMOST ANYTHING! WE MIGHT BE *SURROUNDED* BY PEOPLE RIGHT NOW... AND NOT EVEN BE *AWARE* OF IT!

IN FACT, WE MIGHT NEVER *REALLY* HAVE LEFT THE ONE PLACE WE *LANDED* AT!

NUTS! ARE YOU TRYIN' TO TELL US THAT WE'RE ALL OUTTA OUR TREE?

YOU'VE BEEN THAT WAY ALL YOUR LIFE, BLUE-EYES!

HOLD IT, YOU TWO!

I HEAR THE SOUND OF MUFFLED FOOT-STEPS...JUST AROUND THE CORNER..!

THERE'S A CHANCE THAT IT MIGHT BE...

BUT, BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED---

IT'S HIM AGAIN!

WHAT A BLAST!

MY HEAD'S STILL SPINNING!

YOU SURE COME ON LIKE GANGBUSTERS, CHARLIE!

AND THAT'S JUST THE WAY YER GONNA TAKE OFF, TOO!

CAREFUL! HE'S IN A NEW MULTI-PURPOSE FORM!

THIS TIME YOU FACE THE REAL PSYCHO-MAN...

..BECAUSE THIS TIME WILL BE OUR FINAL CON-FRONTATION!

THIS TIME... YOU DIE!

AND THE FIRST TO FEEL MY MATCH-LESS POWER SHALL BE...THE MIS-SHAPEN MONSTER YOU CALL...THE THING!

SINCE YOUR PRIMARY WEAPON IS STRENGTH...

I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT NAKED STRENGTH REALLY IS!

AND WHAT DID YOU THINK *I'D* BE DOING WHILE YOU LAUNCH YOUR MANIACAL *ATTACK?*

IF *THAT* WAS...THE BEST..YA COULD *DO*... WITH YER BLASTED *STRENGTH*...

YOU GOT A REAL *SUR-PRISE*..IN STORE... WHEN IT'S *MY* TURN... TO START *WHUMPIN'*..!

MY *RIGHT* HAND, WITH WHICH I STRUCK YOUR BESTIAL COMPANION, IS A BLOCK OF MASSIVE *ORE* WHICH CAN SHATTER A *BUILDING!*

BUT, THE WEAPON UPON MY *LEFT* HAND...IS QUITE *DIFFERENT!*

AS YOU CAN *SEE*...IT CONTAINS A PAIR OF TWIN, COMPATIBLE *ELECTRODES*...

...WHICH CONSTANTLY *INCREASE* THEIR SHOCK-ING *VOLTAGE* AS LONG AS THEY ARE APPLIED!

BUT, YOU *ALREADY* SEEM TO BE QUITE *AWARE* OF THAT FACT!

A *PITY* YOUR SUPPLE BODY IS NOT EQUALLY *SHOCK-PROOF!*

AHH... I RATHER *THOUGHT* IT WOULD NOT BE LONG BEFORE YOU *RELEASED* ME!

BUT, I SEE THE *FIERY* MEMBER OF YOUR BUMBLING LITTLE BAND IS NOW ABOUT TO MAKE HIS *OWN* FUTILE EFFORT!

KEEP *TALKING*, MISTER! AFTER WE'RE *FINISHED*, YOU MAY NOT HAVE THE *CHANCE!*

I DON'T CARE *WHAT* KIND OF CRAZY *ARMOR* YOU'RE WEARING...

IT WON'T BE ABLE TO PROTECT YOU FROM A LOW-YIELD, INSTANT-FORMING *THERMO-BLAST!*

PERHAPS NOT... *IF* YOUR INEFFECTUAL ONSLAUGHT WERE TO *STRIKE* ME!

HOWEVER, MY HIGHLY-POTENT *ELECTRODES* HAVE THE ABILITY TO *SPIN* LIKE PROPELLERS...

...THUS CREATING A POWERFUL *JET-WASH*...

...WHICH CAN BLOW YOUR USELESS THERMO-BLAST *BACK* TO YOU...LIKE A CAPTIVE *WHIRLWIND!*

NICE WORK, JUNIOR!

YA KEPT 'IM BUSY JUST LONG *ENOUGH*...!

SO *NOW* WE'LL SEE HOW HE CAN HANDLE A WHOLE CRUMMY *CAVE-IN*...ALL AT *ONCE!*

KRAK!

NO! NO!

EXACTLY TWO SECONDS LATER..*

I CAN'T MOVE! I'M BEING CRUSHED!

HELP ME! SAVE ME! DON'T LEAVE ME HERE!

SURE, SWEETIE... SURE! I'M GONNA GITCHA OUTTA THERE...AND HOW!

*..NOT THAT IT WOULD REALLY MATTER EVEN IF IT WERE THREE SECONDS LATER! --SQUARE-SHOOTING STAN.

NO, BEN! STAY BACK!

DON'T HURT HIM! OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO SET HIM FREE!

YEAH? TELL IT TO MY AUNT PETUNIA, STRETCHO!

WE DON'T KNOW WHERE BEN'S BELOVED AUNT IS AT THIS VERY MOMENT, BUT FORTUNATELY, WE ARE ABLE TO LOCATE. THE SILVER SURFER...SO WHY NOT..?

GALACTUS HAS ANSWERED MY SUMMONS!

I HAVE BROUGHT YOU TO THE WORLD YOU SEEK!

HERE THERE IS ENERGY ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN YOUR INCOMPREHENSIBLE HUNGER!

THUS, I NOW ASK THAT YOU SET ME FREE--- FREE TO ROAM THE SKYWAYS OF SPACE--- FREE OF MY BONDAGE TO THE PLANET EARTH!

YOUR REQUEST IS DENIED!

SO LONG AS LIFE ENDURES...I MUST EVER KNOW WHERE YOU SHALL BE FOUND!

THOUGH I MAY NOT RETURN FOR COUNTLESS *MILLENIUMS*... ALL MUST *BE* AS NOW IT *IS*!

SUCH IS THE WILL OF GALACTUS!

I HAVE BEEN *RETURNED*...

TO THE MAD, ORBITING *PRISON* WHICH MEN CALL... *EARTH!*

THIS THEN IS MY *DESTINY!*

THIS THEN... IS MY *FATE!*

I AM *CONDEMNED* TO DWELL AMONGST THOSE WHOM I HAVE SAVED!

YET, DESPITE THE *ANGUISH* IN MY HEART ...THE *SORROW* IN MY SOUL...I DID WHAT I BELIEVED TO BE *RIGHT*..!

I COULD HAVE DONE---*NO LESS!**

*AND *YOU* CAN DO NO LESS THAN TO READ THE *SILVER SURFER'S* OWN ADVENTURES IN HIS *OWN MAG!* GET IT *TODAY!*...SALESMAN STAN.

AND NOW, BACK TO THE *MICRO-WORLD*...!

WADDAYA *MEAN* WE GOTTA SET 'IM *FREE?*

HE'S BEEN TRYIN' TA COOK OUR *GOOSES* SINCE WE *GOT* HERE!

I *KNOW,* OLD FRIEND...BUT WE'LL BE TRAPPED HERE *FOREVER* WITHOUT HIM!

WITHOUT RETURNING TO OUR *REDUCTA-CRAFT,* WE'VE NO MEANS OF REACHING *HOME* AGAIN!

AND ONLY *PSYCHO-MAN* KNOWS WHERE IT *IS*...

AND HOW TO *GET* US THERE!

HE KNOWS HE'S *ALREADY* MADE A FATAL MISTAKE... THE MISTAKE OF *UNDERESTIMATING* US!

HE WAS SO CONFIDENT OF *VICTORY,* THAT HE CHOSE TO BATTLE US IN *PERSON* THIS LAST TIME, INSTEAD OF USING ANOTHER *PSYCHO-IMAGE,* AS HE DID IN THE PAST!

AND NOW, HE MUST *PAY* FOR THAT BLUNDER... *OUR* WAY!

FREE HIM, BEN! GET HIM *OUT* FROM UNDER THE WRECKAGE!

YOU'VE GOT TO *TRUST* ME AGAIN!

OKAY, OKAY! I TRUST YA... I *TRUST* YA!

ANYTHING TO MAKE YOU STOP *SOUNDIN' OFF!*

SPLAK!

FOOL! DO YOU EXPECT ME TO POSSESS THE WEAK HUMAN QUALITY OF GRATI-TUDE?

NO! BUT I DO EXPECT YOU TO HAVE A UNIVERSAL INSTINCT FOR SELF-PRESERVATION!

THERE IS A DEADLY BEING FROM OUTER SPACE THREATENING ALL OF EARTH! WE ARE NEEDED BACK HOME TO BATTLE HIM!

FOR, IF OUR LARGER WORLD IS DESTROYED...THEN YOU...HERE IN YOUR MICRO-WORLD, WILL BE DESTROYED AS WELL!

LIKE IT OR NOT, YOUR FATE IS INEXORABLY LINKED WITH OURS!

REMAIN MOTION-LESS WHILE I PROBE YOUR MIND!

IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE..!

YOU DID SPEAK THE TRUTH! OF THAT, THERE IS NO DOUBT!

I SENSE AN ALIEN GALACTIC POWER... SO AWESOME ... SO TOTALLY OMNISCIENT... THAT HE CAN DESTROY US WITH THE MEREST GESTURE!

OUR BATTLE IS STILL UNRESOLVED... BUT THAT MATTERS NOT!

YOU MUST RETURN FROM WHENCE YOU CAME... AND ADD YOUR OWN POWERS TO THOSE OF YOUR FELLOW BEINGS...IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST GALACTUS!

THEN SEND US TO OUR SHIP!

YOU NO LONGER NEED YOUR SHIP!

THERE IS A FASTER WAY... THE WAY OF PSYCHO-MAN!

YOU DID IT, REED! WE'VE WON!

WE ALL DID IT, JOHNNY!

BUT OUR VICTORY IS MEANINGLESS... UNLESS THE SURFER HAS DONE HIS SHARE!

YEAH! LET'S HOPE WE STILL GOT A WORLD TO GIT BACK TO!

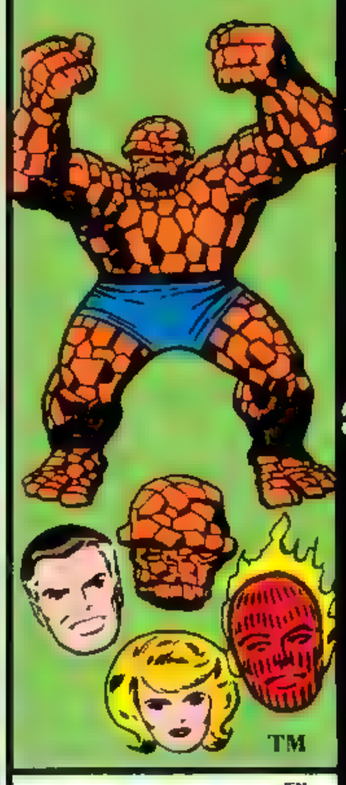
BUT, AS THEY SOON SHALL LEARN... EARTH ENDURES! ALTHOUGH A NEW, AND DIFFERENT DANGER AWAITS THEM!

NEXT: THE END OF THE THING!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY



MARVEL™ COMICS GROUP

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THE THING NO MORE!

THE FABULOUS F.F.'S FORENSIC MR. FANTASTIC DOES IT AT LAST!

THE THING NO MORE!

WE MADE IT!

WE'RE HOME AGAIN!

THIS SURE BEATS TAKIN' THE FLATBUSH LOCAL!

LAST ISH OUR GAGGLE OF SUPERHEROES WERE SENT SPINNING HOMEWARD FROM THE AWESOME SUB-ATOMIC WORLD OF PSYCHOMAN! AND NOW, AS ANY BELIEVER CAN PLAINLY SEE, THEY'VE REACHED THEIR EARTHLY GOAL...

CREATED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY STAN (THE MAN) LEE and JACK (KING) KIRBY

EXTRAVAGENT EMBELLISHMENT: JOLTIN' JOE SINNOTT

LETHARGIC LETTERING: SWINGIN' SAMMY ROSEN

BUT, LEAVE US NOT BE LULLED INTO A SENSE OF FALSE SECURITY! FOR, AS SURELY AS MARVELDOM ENDURETH...

THE BEST IS YET TO COME...

REED! EVERY-THING IS AS WE LEFT IT!

THAT MUST MEAN...

THE SILVER SURFER REACHED GALACTUS IN TIME!

EARTH IS SAVED!*

*IF YOU MISSED THIS ANGLE LAST ISH, FORGET IT! IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS MONTH'S YARN ANYWAY! ..STRAIGHT-TALKIN' STAN.

SHEEESH! WE MAY HAVETA START COLLECTIN' UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE!

SUE! I HAVE TO SEE SUE!

IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR... THE BABY!

I AIN'T HEARD FROM ALICIA, EITHER!

I BETTER GO SEE HER, BEFORE SHE FERGETS ABOUT HER BLUSHIN' BLUE-EYED DREAMBOAT!

NAHH, WHAT'S THE POINT? SHE PROBABLY LATCHED ONTA SOMEONE ELSE BY NOW!

WHAT DOES SHE NEED WITH A WALKIN' FREAK SHOW LIKE ME?

HEY, BENJY! ISN'T IT A REAL BLAST TO BE HOME AGAIN!

YEAH, SURE, JUNIOR! IT'S... A REAL... BLAST!

I'M GONNA HEAD FOR THE WILD BLUE YONDER 'N GIVE THE NATIVES A THRILL!

THEN MAYBE YOU AND ALICIA CAN DOUBLE DATE WITH CRYS AND ME!

WATCH WHERE YER FLYIN', YA BLASTED MATCH-HEAD!

I GOT MORE IMPORTANT STUFF TO THINK OF... THAN DATIN'!

POOR OL' BEN'S IN ONE OF HIS "I'M SORRY I'M THE THING" MOODS AGAIN!

WELL, HE'LL COME OUT OF IT SOONER OR LATER!

HMMPH! THE FF'S BACK! BIG DEAL... NOW THAT THE DANGER'S ALREADY OVER!

I HEARD WHAT THAT JOKER SAID!

BOY... IF HE ONLY KNEW THE HALF OF IT!

I STILL FEEL GOOD JUST KNOWING THEY'RE AROUND!

HEY, TORCH.. GIVE THE RED BARON ONE FOR ME!

BUT, IN THE MILLING THRONG BELOW, THERE IS ONE WHOSE REACTIONS ARE A BIT... DIFFERENT!

SO! MY INTENDED VICTIMS HAVE RETURNED AT LAST!

I MUST SEE THAT THEY ARE GIVEN A FITTING WELCOME!

10¢ DAILY BUGLE

WIZARD RELEASED FROM PRISON VOWS VENGEANCE ON FANTASTIC 4

FINAL ☆

DAILY

EACH TIME WE FOUGHT IN THE PAST, I CAME CLOSER TO DEFEATING THEM!

AND NOW, THE WIZARD IS FAR STRONGER... FAR MORE DEADLY, THAN EVER BEFORE!

...AS MY DOOMED ARCH-FOES SHALL SOON FIND OUT!

MEANWHILE, ONE OF THOSE "DOOMED ARCH-FOES" FINALLY WEARIES OF HIS SIZZLING SPORT, AND SO...

GUESS I MIGHT AS WELL QUIT WHILE I'M AHEAD!

'SIDES, POOR CRYS IS PROBABLY BUSTIN' TO SHOWER ME WITH LOVE'N KISSES!

AND WHO AM I TO KEEP A LOVELY LADY WAITING?

HEY, BENJY... HOW COME CRYS ISN'T HERE YET? DIDN'T SHE CALL?

YEAH, HOTSHOT... SHE CALLED!

SHE'S AT THE HOSPITAL, LOOKIN' AFTER SUE... IN THE MATERNITY WARD!

SHE TOLD ME IF I RUN INTA YA TO SAY HELLO!

AND I THOUGHT SHE WAS CRYING HER *EYES* OUT 'CAUSE I WAS *GONE!*

MAN, WAIT'LL I *SEE* THAT CHICK--!

RELAX, LOVER BOY! THERE AIN'T NO *VISITORS* ALLOWED THERE UNTIL LATER ON!

HOWZABOUT SPLITTIN' A PASTRAMI SAN'WICH?

WHAT'S *WITH* YOU, BEN! IS YOUR *BELLY* ALL YOU EVER *THINK* ABOUT?

WHEN YA LOOK LIKE *ME*, WHAT ELSE *IS* THERE, CHARLIE?

I'M *SORRY*, BIG BUDDY! I SHOULDN'T HAVE *SAID* THAT!

THAT'S OKAY, HALF-PINT! WHO *LISTENS?*

TELL YA WHAT... SINCE WE GOT SOME *TIME* TA KILL, LET'S CHECK THINGS *OUT* AROUND HERE!

GOOD IDEA, BEN!

IT'S BEEN *MONTHS* SINCE WE'VE HAD A CHANCE TO TEST OUT ALL OUR EQUIP-MENT!

WHAT'S WITH THIS BLAMED *ELEVATOR BUTTON?* IT AIN'T *WORKIN'!*

WOW! YOU *HAVE* BEEN AWAY TOO LONG..!

DON'T YOU *REMEMBER* THAT THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST *PROTECTIVE DEVICES* REED EVER INSTALLED?

HE DIDN'T WANT JUST *ANYBODY* TO BE ABLE TO DROP IN ON US!

THAT'S WHY HE BUILT THIS ELECTRONIC *DOOHICKEY* IN OUR BELT BUCKLES!

CLICK!

YEAH, YEAH... *NOW* I REMEMBER!

THE ONLY THING *WRONG* WITH IT IS... IT NEVER KEPT OUT THE *DANGEROUS* CREEPS WHO WUZ AFTER US!

BUT IT WORKED *WONDERS* AGAINST *BILL COLLECTORS!*

ZILT!

C'MON, WE MIGHT AS WELL START WITH THE *ROOF FLOOR*...

THAT'S WHERE MOST OF THE *DAMAGE* WAS DONE DURING OUR LAST BATTLE!

YA MEAN THE *CLEANIN' WOMAN* DIDN'T TIDY IT UP YET?

I'VE GOT A HUNCH *THIS* KIND OF WORK ISN'T EXACTLY IN HER *CONTRACT!*

DO YA EVER GIT THE FEELIN' THAT MAYBE WE PLAY A LITTLE TOO *ROUGH?*

WELL, DON'T JUST *STAND* THERE, JUNIOR!

GO GIT ME A *WASTE BASKET* OR SOMETHIN'!

THIS OVERGROWN PIPE CLEANER AIN'T GITTIN' ANY *LIGHTER!*

YOU'RE DOING IT THE *HARD* WAY, BIG MAN!

JUST STEP ASIDE AND LET YOUR BIDDY BUDDY *SHOW* YOU..!

NOTHING LIKE HAVING A PORTABLE *INCINERATOR* AT YOUR BECK AND CALL, EH?

SHOOK!

YEAH... SO LONG AS YA WATCH OUT FOR *SMOKEY THE BEAR!*

WELL, I GUESS IT'LL BE BACK TO THE OL' DRAWING BOARD FOR REED!

SURE, IT DON'T TAKE *HIM* LONG TO COOK UP ANY NUTTY GIZMO HE NEEDS!

'CEPTIN' FOR SOMETHIN' THAT'LL MAKE A HUMAN BEING OUTTA *ME!*

MINUTES LATER, IN THE FF'S PRIVATE BASEMENT GARAGE AND VEHICLE MAINTAINENCE SECTION ...

GARAGE 4

SHE'LL NEVER QUALIFY AS A HOT ROD, BUT THE OL' FANTASTI-CAR STILL LOOKS PRETTY GOOD TO ME!

IT'S A LITTLE TOO CRAMPED FOR ANY SPARE-TIME SMOOCHING WITH CRYS THOUGH!

I MIGHT AS WELL STICK TA MY JET CYCLE, FER ALL THE SMOOCHIN' A GUY LIKE ME CAN EXPECT!

THE POOR GUY'S STILL FEELING SORRY FOR HIM-SELF...

AND I JUST CAN'T JOLLY HIM OUT OF IT!

BEN! JOHNNY! REPORT TO THE MONITOR ROOM... ON THE DOUBLE!

IT'S REED! MAYBE THERE'S SOME NEWS OF SUE!

WOULDN'T IT BE SOMETHING IF SHE HAD A BOY... AND IF I'M AN UNCLE?!!

WHATS'A DIFFERENCE IF IT'S A BOY?

YA THINK HAVIN A GIRL'LL MAKE YA AN AUNT?!!

THAT'S REAL FUNNY, BEN!

NUTS! WHAT'S SO HARD ABOUT BEIN' A COMEDIAN?

I'LL BET BILL COSBY'S WORRIED SICK ABOUT ALL THE COMPETITION YOU MIGHT GIVE HIM!

I CAN GIT LAUGHS JUST BY STANDIN' THERE!

I'M GLAD REED CALLED US! NEVER SAW BEN IN SUCH A BLUE MOOD BEFORE!

ANY NEWS FROM THE HOSPITAL, BROTHER-IN-LAW?

IT'S STILL TOO EARLY, JOHNNY!

POGO PLANE

BUT WE'VE SOMETHING ELSE TO DO..!

PROJECTION ROOM

I HARDLY KNOW HOW TO SAY THIS... AFTER ALL THE DISAPPOINTMENTS WE'VE HAD IN THE PAST...

DISAPPOINTMENTS? YOU SOUND AS THOUGH... IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH... TRYING TO CHANGE BEN BACK TO NORMAL!

YOU HIT IT, LAD! I THINK I'VE FINALLY FOUND... THE FORMULA!

HERE WE GO AGAIN, HUH KIDDIES?

I KNOW THE HEARTBREAK YOU'VE SUFFERED, OLD FRIEND... WHEN THE CHANGES WEREN'T PERMANENT BEFORE!

BUT THIS TIME... IT'S GOING TO BE DIFFERENT!

I'VE GOT EVERY-THING READY... THERE IN THE CHEM LAB!

THEN... YA DIDN'T FORGET!

YOU REALLY HAVE BEEN WORKIN' ON IT... LIKE YA ONCE PRO-MISED ME!

ELECTRO COMPUT

CHEMISTF LAB

I'LL NEVER GIVE UP, BEN! YOU MUST BELIEVE THAT!

BUT, IT SEEMS THAT SOME ARCH-VILLAINS FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT GIVING UP! ERGO...

TRUE, THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE BEATEN ME IN THE PAST...

BUT, THAT WAS BEFORE THE WIZARD WORE ...HIS MULTI-POWERED WONDER-GLOVES!

WITH THESE MAGNIFICENT NEW *WEAPONS* TO AID ME...

I'M MORE THAN A MATCH FOR *ANY* GROUP OF SO-CALLED *SUPERHEROES!*

AS THE UNSUSPECTING *FANTASTIC FOUR* SHALL SOON FIND OUT!

SO LONG AS I *WEAR THESE* MY GREATEST CREATIONS...

MY *POWER* BECOMES VIRTUALLY *INCALCU-LABLE!*

EVEN IF THE BESTIAL *THING* WERE AS MIGHTY AS THIS CAST-IRON *ANVIL*...

I NOW CAN *DOWN* HIM WITH A *SINGLE BLOW!*

SKRAWG

THUS, THERE IS *NO REASON* FOR FURTHER *DELAY!*

THE TIME HAS COME TO *CRUSH* THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

AND, ON THAT SOMEWHAT SOMBER NOTE, LET'S REJOIN OUR GRIM LITTLE GROUP AT A MOST *MOMENTOUS* MOMENT...

I HAVE EVERY REASON TO HOPE... TO BELIEVE..THAT *THIS* TIME THE CHANGE WILL BE *PERMANENT!*

THAT MEANS..I WON'T BE..A WALKIN' *MONSTER* ANY MORE!

I WON'T HAVETA...CHOKE BACK THE *WORDS*... I BEEN ACHIN' TO SAY... TO *ALICIA!*

DEAR GOD...MAKE IT *WORK!*

IT'S *GOT* TO WORK!

DRINK THIS, BEN!

SURE!

WHAT 'UVE I GOT TA *LOSE?*

REED! HE'S SO *QUIET*... SO *STILL!*

HE ISN'T... YOU DIDN'T..??

NO, LAD...HE'S *ALIVE!*

THE POTION MERELY PUT HIM INTO A DEEP *SLEEP!*

STAND BEHIND THIS PLEXIGLASS *SHIELD*, JOHNNY!

IF ALL GOES WELL...HIS BODY WILL RELEASE A SUDDEN SURGE OF *CHEMI-COSMIC ENERGY...*

WATCH!

COVER YOUR EYES!! IT'S WORKING!

REED! YOU DID IT!

HE'S CHANGING! RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES!

HE'S TURNING INTO..THE REAL BEN GRIMM AGAIN!

MY SKIN... IT..IT FEELS LIKE...REAL FLESH!

MY HANDS... MY FACE...

I'M A NORMAL HUMAN BEING ONCE MORE!

BETTER HOLD ONTO THOSE TIGHTS, MR. GRIMM!

YOU'LL FIND THEM TOO BIG FOR YOU NOW!

CONGRATULATIONS, BEN! WELCOME BACK TO THE HUMAN RACE, BUDDY BOY!

BUT, WE STILL HAVE TO FIND OUT ...WILL IT LAST?

YOU'LL NEVER *KNOW*, GRIMM!

NONE OF YOU WILL *LIVE* LONG ENOUGH!

ZIT!

A *SHOCK BOLT!!* FROM...

SURELY YOU STILL *REMEMBER* ME..? YOUR ONE-TIME ANTAGONIST... THE WINGLESS *WIZARD!*

USING MY MINIATURIZED *FLYING DISCS*, IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER TO ENTER THRU THE *HOLE* IN YOUR ROOF!

AND NOW... YOU'LL FEEL THE POWER OF.. MY *WONDER GLOVES!*

A PITY THE *THING* IS NO LONGER WORTHY OF *CONTENTION!*

I'D HAVE ENJOYED SMASHING *HIM* IN THIS SELFSAME MANNER!

LISTEN, YOU HOKEY, HIGH-FLYIN' *HEEL*...

AFTER WHAT WE'VE JUST BEEN *UP* AGAINST, WE'LL POLISH *YOU* OFF WITHOUT HALF *TRYING!*

FLAME ON!

AND NO CORNY *GLOVE* IS GONNA *STOP* US!

WRONGER YOU COULDN'T BE, MY FATUOUS FRIEND!

JUST *WATCH!*

I DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE'S *STANDING* HIS GROUND...LOOKING SO *CONFIDENT!*

ALL I NEED DO IS USE MY *GLOVE* ANOTHER TIME...

...TO CREATE A WHIRLING *TYPHOON-SPHERE*...

JOHNNY!

IT'S *SPINNING* INTO ME... DISPERSING MY *FLAME!*

AND NOTICE HOW IT *GROWS*, YOU YOUNG FOOL...

SEE HOW IT *ENGULFS* YOU!

CAN'T *STOP* IT! CAN'T GET *AWAY!*

IT'S ABOUT TO *FLING* ME... RIGHT ACROSS THE *ROOM*...!

CRASH

HAH! I HAVE *PREPARED* TOO CARE-FULLY FOR *UNHH!*

ROK!

THAT *SINKS* IT, YOU SLIMY, SNEERING *WEASEL!*

NOW IT'S *OUR* TURN!

BUT, EVEN AS THE FIGHTING-MAD *MR. FANTASTIC* HURLS HIMSELF AGAINST HIS DEADLY FOE, A SURPRISING *NEW DEVELOPMENT* IS ABOUT TO OCCUR IN THE HOSPITAL ROOM WHICH HOUSES HIS VALIANT *WIFE*...

DO YOU AGREE WITH MY *PROGNOSIS*, DOCTOR?

YES! I'M AFRAID SO!

THERE CAN BE *NO DOUBT* ABOUT IT!

WHAT *IS* IT? WHAT'S WRONG WITH *MRS. RICHARDS?*

THERE'S NO POINT IN KEEPING IT *SECRET!*

WHY ARE THEY *WHISPER-ING?* WHAT DOES IT *MEAN?*

THEY'RE *BOUND* TO FIND OUT SOONER OR LATER!

YOU'VE *GOT* TO TELL ME!

IT'S NOTHING TO BE *ALARMED* ABOUT, MISS CRYSTAL...

AT LEAST... NOT JUST *YET!*

LET THE YOUNG LADY STEP OVER *HERE!* PERHAPS I CAN *SHOW* HER WHAT THE PROBLEM IS!

THIS IS A RECENT MICRO-PHOTO OF HER *BLOOD CELLS*... ENLARGED MANY TIMES, OF COURSE!

BUT, WHAT ARE THOSE STRANGE-LOOKING *FLASHES?*

PRECISELY WHAT *WE* HAVE BEEN WONDERING, MY CHILD!

AS YOU KNOW, MRS. RICHARDS HAS STRANGE *POWERS*, CAUSED BY COSMIC RADIATION!

WE HAVE *NO IDEA* HOW THIS WILL AFFECT THE *BIRTH* OF HER BABY!

THEN... *ANYTHING* IS LIABLE TO HAPPEN!

AND, SPEAKING OF THINGS *HAPPENING*...

SWIZZ ZH

WE'VE BEATEN YOU *BEFORE* ...AND WE'LL DO IT *AGAIN*... IN *SPADES!*

WHEW... MY *HEAD!* FEELS LIKE I'VE... *HEY!* WHAT'S GOIN' *ON?*

THAT'S THE *WIZARD* TANGLIN' WITH REED!

HE'S TRYIN' TO *DO* SOMETHING WITH HIS *GLOVE* ...IT'S BEGINNING TO *GLOW*..!

STRETCHO.. LOOK OUT!!

TOO LATE! HE...MANAGED TO UNLEASH... AN INTENSIFIED *VOLT BLAST!*

REED TOOK THE FULL *FORCE* OF IT...

BUT I WAS *SHIELDED* ...'WAY BACK *HERE!*

FUN TIME'S *OVER,* DOME HEAD!

WHEN I GET *DONE* WITH YA, YOU'LL BE SWAPPIN' THOSE NUTTY *GLOVES* FOR A SET OF *BAND AIDS!*

YOU'RE A BIGGER FOOL THAN I *THOUGHT!*

CAN'T YOU SEE HOW *HELPLESS* YOU ARE AGAINST ME?

KEEP *TALKIN'*, BIG MOUTH--- WHILE YA *CAN!*

NO CORNY PAIR OF *GLOVES* ARE GONNA--

UNHHH!

I JUST *REALIZED*.. YOU'RE NOT AWARE WHAT *HAPPENED*..!

YOU STILL *THINK* OF YOURSELF AS THE SUPER-POWERFUL, RAMPAGING *THING!!*

WADDAYA MEAN *THINK* OF MYSELF?

WHEN I GET THIS HUNK'A *STEEL* TWISTED AROUND YER SCRAWNY NECK, YOU'LL---

HEY! WHAT *GIVES--?*

WHY AIN'T I RIPPIN' IT *LOOSE?*

I CAN'T EVEN *BUDGE* IT! MY ARMS ARE TOO... ...*WAIT!!*

NOW I REMEMBER! REED CHANGED ME *BACK*...TO *BEN GRIMM!*

MY *ARMS*... MY *SKIN*...I.. I'M NOT THE *THING* ANY-MORE!

DON'T WASTE TIME ON IDLE *REGRETS*, SIMPLETON!

EVEN AS THE *THING*, MY *WONDER GLOVES* WOULD FLOOR YOU!

THE ONLY *DIFFERENCE* IS... I CAN CRUSH YOU EVEN *FASTER* NOW!

AND SO *ENDS* THE USELESS CAREER OF THE ONCE-MIGHTY *THING!*

BEN!

IF HE HITS THAT *STEEL WALL* HEAD FIRST...HE'S *FINISHED!*

I'VE GOT TO GET THERE *AHEAD* OF HIM!

BTHUP!

UHHHH..!

YOU *SAVED* HIM, RICHARDS... BUT, IN SO DOING, YOU KNOCKED *YOURSELF* OUT!

THUS, YOU HAVE RENDERED YOURSELF *HELPLESS* BEFORE THE POUNDING POWER OF MY INVINCIBLE *GLOVES!*

I WOULDN'T *BET* ON THAT, EGG-HEAD!

BRAVE WORDS, YOU BRAINLESS, BLAZING BRAT!

NO MEMBER OF THE *FANTASTIC FOUR* IS EVER GONNA BE *HELPLESS*... NOT WHILE THERE'S *ONE* OF US...STILL ABLE TO *FIGHT!*

WORDS WHICH WILL FORM YOUR FINAL *EPITAPH!*

HAVE YOU *FORGOTTEN* HOW EASILY I CAN COMBAT YOUR FUTILE *FLAME?*

YOU SHOULD HAVE *QUIT* WHILE YOU WERE *AHEAD*, MURDERER!

...'CAUSE *THIS* TIME THERE'S *NOTHING* THAT CAN SAVE YOU!

WRONG *AGAIN*, YOU JUVENILE JACKANAPES!

NOTHING YOU CAN DO WILL PENETRATE MY GLOVE-INDUCED *FORCE-FIELD!*

SURE, WIZARD.. SURE! YOU JUST *BELIEVE* IT!

YOU'RE SO BUSY GLOATING OF YOUR CORNY FORCE FIELD...

THAT YOU OVERLOOKED YOUR ONE POINT OF VULNERABILITY...

NAMELY, THE FLOOR BELOW YOU...ON WHICH YOU WERE STANDING!

IT WORKED! I NEEDLED HIM INTO STANDING JUST WHERE I WANTED HIM..!

HEY, BIG BRAIN.. ENJOYING YOUR LITTLE BATH IN REED'S OVERSIZED CHEM-TANK?

YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING, TORCH!

MY FORCE FIELD EASILY PROTECTS ME FROM THE EFFECTS OF ANY HARMFUL CHEMICALS!

SURE IT DOES, BAD MAN...

BUT WAIT'LL YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!

IF I CAN JUST ACTIVATE THE MAIN PANEL IN TIME..!

CLICK!

KHPUP!

I DID IT! I CLAMPED THE LID ON HIM!

AN IDLE GESTURE!

I CAN STILL BREAK FREE WITH MY WONDER GLOVES!

NOT IF YOU DON'T GET A CHANCE TO USE THEM!

I FORGOT TO MENTION ONE ITTY BITTY THING, WIZ...

YOU LANDED IN A CENTRIFUGE TANK--WHICH CAN WHIRL YOU AROUND LIKE A HUMAN PROP!

BUT YOU PROBABLY GET THE IDEA BY NOW!

MEANWHILE, A BATTERED AND BRUISED BEN GRIMM COMES TO A SUDDEN REALIZATION...

REED SAVED MY LIFE... BY TAKING THE ENTIRE IMPACT ON HIS OWN BODY!

IT WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED... IF I HAD STILL BEEN... THE THING!

I WOULD'A BEEN ABLE TO PULL MY OWN WEIGHT-- TO DO MY OWN SHARE OF THE FIGHTING! BUT NOW...

HE'S ALIVE! HE'S STILL BREATHIN'! HE'S GONNA MAKE IT!

HOW CAN I LIVE WITH MYSELF... IF CHANGING ME BACK TO NORMAL... COST MY BEST FRIEND ... HIS LIFE?

REED! IT'S ME... IT'S BEN!

C'MON, OL' BUDDY... SNAP OUT OF IT, HEAR?

BEN! THIS TIME IT WORKED! YOU'RE STILL YOURSELF! YOU DIDN'T CHANGE BACK...!

YEAH, IT WORKED JUST FINE, PARTNER!

BUT... I JUST RE-MEMBERED!

THE WIZARD! WHERE IS HE? WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE'S THE TORCH?

LISTEN! I HEAR 'IM NOW! HE'S CALLIN'... FROM DOWNSTAIRS!

THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

THERE HE IS! THE WIZARD IS DOWN! JOHNNY BEAT HIM!

NATURALLY! DIDN'T WE TEACH 'IM ALL HE KNOWS?

ANYONE WANNA BUY A PAIR OF GOOFY GLOVES?

HANDLE THEM WITH CARE, LAD!

I'LL WANT TO STUDY EVERY FIBER OF THEIR MAKEUP!

THEY DON'T LOOK LIKE MUCH NOW... BUT THEY ALMOST ENABLED HIM TO BEAT US!

AND A FAT LOTTA HELP I TURNED OUT TO BE!

FOOLS! YOU HAVEN'T WON YET!

NOT WHILE I STILL POSSESS MY ANTI-GRAV FLYING DISCS!

LOOK OUT! HE'S GETTING AWAY!

I'LL FLAME ON... AND GO AFTER HIM!

NO! STAY WHERE YOU ARE, JOHNNY!

YOU'VE USED UP TOO MUCH ENERGY ALREADY! ..YOU'LL NEVER OVERTAKE HIM!

WITHOUT THE MAIN CONTROL STUD WHICH I STILL POSSESS, MY GLOVES WILL BE TOTALLY WORTHLESS TO YOU!

AND, ONCE I HAVE CONSTRUCTED A NEWER... MORE POWERFUL PAIR... I'LL BE BACK!

...WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT ME!

WELL, THAT'S A CHEERY THOUGHT!

CROW ALL YOU WANT TO, GRUESOME--

IF MY FLAME WAS AT ITS PEAK... OR IF REED HADN'T BEEN HURT... OR IF BEN WAS STILL THE THING...

BUT, BEN WASN'T THE THING...SO I FAILED US ALL!

REED, YOU'VE GOTTA GIVE ME SOMETHING... SO I CAN TURN INTO THAT BLUE-EYED LUMP'A LARD WHENEVER YOU NEED ME!

NO, BEN! DON'T SAY IT! DON'T, EVEN ASK ME!

WHY NOT? WHAT'S WRONG, FELLA? WHAT IS IT?

THE ONLY WAY I COULD CREATE THE FORMULA... WAS TO MAKE IT A ONE-WAY STREET!

YOU CAN CHANGE BACK TO THE THING... JUST ONE MORE TIME---

BUT, IF YOU DO---

YOU CAN NEVER BECOME BEN GRIMM, AGAIN!

THEN, I MUST EITHER REMAIN AS BEN GRIMM... OR BECOME THE THING... FOREVER!

NEXT BEN'S CHOICE!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THIS MONSTER FOREVER!

MARVEL™ COMICS GROUP

12¢ IND. | 79 OCT

THE FF'S MOST POWERFUL MEMBER MUST DECIDE AT LAST:

"A MONSTER FOREVER?"

INTRODUCING: THE ANDROID MAN!

HOW'S IT FEEL TO BE BEN GRIMM AGAIN, BIG BUDDY?

I'M SO HAPPY FOR BEN, JOHNNY!

I CAN LIVE WITH IT, KID!

BUT ALICIA'S THE ONE WHO COUNTS!

I GOTTA SEE HOW SHE FEELS ABOUT ME NOT BEING THE THING ANY MORE!

MIGHTY MARVEL'S MOST MASTERFUL MAKERS OF MODERN-DAY MYTHOLOGY,

STAN (THE MAN) LEE and JACK (KING) KIRBY

HAVE DEFINITELY DONE IT AGAIN!

EMBELLISHED BY: JOLTIN' JOE SINNOTT

LETTERED BY: ADORABLE ARTIE SIMEK

IT'S STILL KINDA STRANGE!

I'M NOT USED TO RUBBIN' MY HAND OVER MY FACE--AND FEELING REAL SKIN!

I NEVER DREAMED YOU'D BE SO GROOVY-LOOKING, BEN!

I JUST CAN'T WAIT UNTIL ALICIA REALIZES THAT-YOU'RE BACK TO NORMAL!

IMAGINE HOW THRILLED SHE'LL BE!

I CAN JUST PICTURE YOUR FIRST MEETING! EVEN WITHOUT HER EYESIGHT--A KISS IS STILL A KISS!

HEY!

I DON'T MIND MY GAL BEING FRIENDLY --BUT LET'S NOT OVERDO IT!

SO THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN MISSING ALL THIS TIME!

YOU LUCKY DOG!

JOHNNY! DON'T BE SO CHILDISH!

HOW CAN YOU BE JEALOUS OF YOUR OWN BEST FRIEND?

WHO'S JEALOUS? YOU CAN KISS ANYONE YOU WANT TO--

JUST SO LONG AS HIS INITIALS ARE JOHNNY STORM!

I CAN'T PUT IT OFF ANY LONGER--

I'VE GOT TO SEE ALICIA--TELL HER WHAT'S HAPPENED!

NUTS! I WASN'T AS NERVOUS AS THIS THE TIME I FOUGHT THE HULK!

WHERE ARE *WE* GOING NOW, JOHNNY?

MY *STING RAY* WAS IN FOR ITS 1,000-MILE CHECK!

I FIGURED WE'D PICK IT *UP* NOW!

I'LL GET OUR *PRIVATE ELEVATOR* WITH MY INVISIBLE *BELT BEAM!*

DOES THIS MEAN YOU'RE *OVER* YOUR JEALOUS SULK, MR. STORM?

NO! IT MEANS I WANNA TEACH MY SAUCY SWEETIE A LITTLE *LESSON!*

OH! YOU *BEAST!* PICKING ON A DEFENSE-LESS LITTLE DAMSEL!

LADY, YOU'RE ABOUT AS *DEFENSE-LESS* AS *DR. DOOM!*

BUT I MUST ADMIT YOU'RE *CUTER!*

WOULDJA BELIEVE TWENTY SECONDS LATER--?

LOOK! COMING OUT OF THE *FF's* PRIVATE CAR--

IT'S THE *TORCH,* AND HIS GIRL FRIEND!

JOHNNY, DO YOU GET THE FEELING WE'RE BEING *STARED* AT?

WHATEVER GAVE YOU *THAT* IDEA?

WELL, I GUESS IT'S BETTER THAN *WALKING!*

ONE NICE THING ABOUT BEING THE *HUMAN TORCH--*

JUST SAY THE WORD AND-- *INSTANT PRIVACY!*

YOU MIGHT AS WELL *FLAME OFF* NOW!

I DIDN'T BRING MY *SUN TAN LOTION!*

YOUR WISH IS MY *COMMAND!*

PROMISES! ALWAYS PROMISES!

TOP O' THE *MORNIN'* TO YA, O'HOOLIHAN!

THANKS, ME FOINE BUCKO--

I'LL REMEMBER YE IN ME *WILL!*

JOHNNY, SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE CHANGED TO YOUR REGULAR *STREET CLOTHES*?

TO A SWINGIN' *SUPERHERO*, THESE THREADS *ARE* REGULAR STREET CLOTHES!

RIGHT, O'HOOLEY?

AH, BE *OFF* WITH YA, LADDIE!

'TISN'T THE *CLOTHES* THAT MAKE THE MAN--AND WELL YE *KNOW* IT!

BAXT
BUILD

ANYWAY, YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO *DO* THIS WHILE WEARING MY NEWEST *NEHRU THREADS*, WOULDJA?

OTHER BOYS CALL THEIR DATES A *TAXI!*

OKAY, SO YOU'RE A *TAXI!*

I HAD TO FALL FOR A *COMEDIAN!*

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE IMPOSING ENTRANCE TO THE WORLD-FAMED *BAXTER BUILDING*, WE FIND--

HOW ABOUT A *TAXI*, O'HOOLIHAN?

BAXTER BLDG.

YES, SIR!

BB BB

NOW WHO'D BE KNOWIN' ME *NAME*?

--AND ME NOT RECOGNIZIN' HIS *VOICE!*

'TIS *MESELF* THAT'S NEVER SEEN HIM *BEFORE!*

BUT THE *ADDRESS* HE TOLD THE DRIVER--'TIS WHERE THE BLIND *ALICIA MASTERS* LIVES--HER WHO'S THE APPLE OF THE *THING'S* OWN BLUE EYES!

AHH, THE POOR, DARLIN' TRAGIC *THING!*

IF HE COULD ONLY BE *HUMAN*, WHAT A FOINE BROTH OF A *BHOY* HE'D BE!

I'M AS *JITTERY* AS A KID ON HIS FIRST *DATE!*

WHAT IF SHE FINDS PLAIN BEN GRIMM TOO *DIFFERENT*--TOO *DULL?*

WHAT IF I'VE CHANGED *TOO* MUCH? SHE ALWAYS SAID SHE LOVED ME AS THE *THING*--

I'M SO *SHOOK-UP*, I EVEN BROUGHT THE *WONDER GLOVES* WITH ME THAT WE GOT FROM THE *WIZARD* WHEN HE TRIED TO CLOBBER US!*

*IF YOU DON'T REMEMBER, *SHAME* ON YOU! IT ONLY HAPPENED LAST ISH! --STERN STAN.

AND WHAT ABOUT *ME?* WILL *I* STILL FEEL THE SAME?

IS *BEN GRIMM* GONNA LOVE THE SAME GIRL-- FEEL THE SAME *WAY* ABOUT HER--AS HE DID WHEN HE WAS THE *THING?*

SO DEEPLY WRAPPED IN THOUGHT IS THE TROUBLED MR. GRIMM, THAT HE DOESN'T EVEN *NOTICE* THE SOMEWHAT FLAMBOYANT, FIRE-ENGINE-RED *SPORTS CAR* THAT GLIDES RIGHT *PAST* HIS OWN HIRED CAB--

JOHNNY, AFTER ALL THE *FANTASTI-CARS,* AND *SPACE SHIPS,* AND *POGO PLANES* YOU'VE RIDDEN--HOW CAN A NORMAL *TWO-SEATER* STILL THRILL YOU?

HONEY, THAT'S LIKE SAYING AFTER ALL THE *GIRLS* I'VE KISSED, HOW CAN LITTLE *CRYSTAL*--?

STOP RIGHT *THERE!* I'M SORRY I *ASKED!*

HAH! *NOW* WHO'S JEALOUS?

*OKAY...JOLLY JACK WAS JUST *BUSTIN'* TO DRAW A NEW CORVETTE--BUT NOW THAT HE GOT IT OUT OF HIS SYSTEM, *ONWARD*--

THERE SHE *IS*-- WAITING FOR ME *NOW!*

THE NEXT FEW MINUTES WILL TELL THE TALE!

NOWAY

TAXI

EAGLE CAB CO.

I--HAD ALMOST *FORGOTTON*-- HOW FRAGILE-- HOW *BEAUTIFUL* --SHE IS!

MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE *LAB* OF A CITY HOSPITAL, *ANOTHER* MAN IS EQUALLY NERVOUS--

I'M GLAD YOU *CALLED* ME, DOCTOR! NO MATTER *WHAT* IT MEANS--I'D HAVE *WANTED* TO KNOW!

WE HAVE *NO IDEA* HOW IT WILL AFFECT-- THE *BABY!*

WE'RE NOT EVEN CERTAIN THERE WILL *BE* ANY EFFECT!

STRANGE *ELECTRO-FLASHES*-- WITHIN MY WIFE'S *BLOOD CELLS!*

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE INCREDIBLE *COSMIC ACCIDENT* THAT TRANSFORMED US INTO THE *FANTASTIC FOUR!*

EVEN THOUGH *NO ONE* CAN GUESS WHAT THIS MEANS--I'VE GOT TO LIVE WITH *ONE* INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION--

OUR BABY-- MAY BE BORN-- A *FREAK!*

I'VE *GOT* TO TELL SUE! SHE HAS EVERY *RIGHT* TO KNOW!

BUT, I KNOW IN MY HEART --THAT I *CAN'T!*

SUE, DARLING! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

REED! YOU'RE *SAFE!*

YOU'VE COME *BACK* TO ME-- AT *LAST!*

NOW NOTHING CAN EVER WORRY ME AGAIN! NOW NOTHING CAN EVER BE WRONG!

WE'RE TOGETHER ONCE MORE--THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!

HOW CAN I SPOIL THIS MOMENT FOR HER? HOW CAN I TELL HER THE MOST FRIGHTENING NEWS OF ALL?

REED, YOU'RE SO QUIET--SO DISTANT!

I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU THIS WAY BEFORE!

SORRY, DEAR! I WAS JUST--THINKING OF THE FUTURE!

THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING, TOO--ALL THESE LONG LONELY DAYS AND NIGHTS!

I'VE BEEN THINKING OF OUR CHILD--WONDERING WHETHER IT WILL BE A BOY--OR A GIRL!

AND TRYING TO FIND THE BEST POSSIBLE NAME!

THIS--IS A LOVELY ROOM, SUE!

AND I'M GLAD THAT YOU HAVE--SUCH A WONDERFUL VIEW!

I CAN'T--EVEN BRING MYSELF--TO TALK ABOUT--THE BABY!

REED! WHAT IS IT, DARLING! WHAT'S WRONG?

IF IT'S ANY-THING SERIOUS --YOU MUST TELL ME! I HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW!

THAT'S WHAT HURTS! SHE DOES HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW--BUT HOW--HOW CAN I TELL HER?

YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING THINGS, DARLING!

I'M THE LUCKIEST FELLA ON EARTH!

WITH YOU FOR A WIFE --HOW CAN ANYTHING EVER BE WRONG?

HE'S HIDING SOMETHING! BUT WHAT? AND--WHY?

SPECIAL NOTE: WE'VE INCLUDED THIS PAGE IN ANSWER TO MORE REQUESTS THAN WE CAN POSSIBLY COUNT--AS IF YOU COULDN'T GUESS! --STAN AND JACK.

NO MATTER *WHAT* FATE HAS IN STORE-- I'LL LOVE HER TILL THE END OF MY DAYS! NOTHING WILL *EVER* CHANGE THAT!

ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED IN OUR LIVES BEFORE-- IS JUST A *PROLOGUE* --TO THE UNKNOWN *FUTURE* THAT LIES AHEAD!

BUT, SO LONG AS I CAN *SHARE* THAT FUTURE WITH THE MAN OF MY HEART--WITH MY BELOVED *REED*-- I'LL NEVER BE FRIGHTENED OF *ANYTHING*--EVER AGAIN!

OKAY--NOW THAT WE'VE BROUGHT ALL YOU LATE-COMERS UP TO DATE, LET'S TAKE OFF THE BRAKES--'CAUSE THERE'S *ACTION* AHEAD--!

THE *MAD THINKER* MUST'A THOUGHT WE'D NEVER *FIND* THIS LITTLE HIDEOUT OF HIS!

WHEN THE CHIEF TOLD US TO *IMPOUND* ALL THIS STUFF, HE COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN HOW *MUCH* THERE IS!

WELL, IT WON'T MATTER TO THE *THINKER*--

HE SURE CAN'T USE IT WHILE HE'S IN THE *CLINK!*

WASN'T HE SOME KIND'A SPECIALIST IN *ROBOTS* OR SOMETHING?

NOT ROBOTS--*ANDROIDS* --THEY'RE MORE LIKE REAL *PEOPLE!*

HE USED 'EM TO COMMIT HIS *CRIMES*-- UNTIL THE *FF* CLAMPED DOWN ON HIM!

DON'T OPEN IN ROOM TEMPERA-TURE-

ROBOTS-- ANDROIDS-- WHAT'S THE *DIFF?*

MIGHT AS WELL SEE WHAT'S IN THIS *CRATE*--!

HEY! IT'S A MAN!

LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN *FROZEN STIFF!*

BUT-- IT'S NOT *POSSIBLE!* HE'S GIVING OFF *HEAT!*

WHO *IS* HE? --*WHAT* IS HE?

HE MUST BE--ONE OF THE THINKER'S *ANDROIDS!*

BUT--I NEVER SAW ONE WHO LOOKED SO *HUMAN!* YOU CAN'T BELIEVE--THAT HE'S NOT *ALIVE!*

LOOK OUT!! HE *IS* ALIVE!

THE HEAT--IN THE ROOM-- MUST'A *DONE* IT!-- *UNHHH!*

HOLD YOUR FIRE! DON'T SHOOT--TILL WE LEARN MORE ABOUT HIM!

I HAVE BEEN WAITING--AS ORDERED! BUT NOW--MY TIME IS COME! NOW, I MUST WAIT--NO LONGER!

THE TIME IS COME--TO DO THAT WHICH I WAS CREATED TO DO!

STAY OUT OF HIS WAY! HE'S A WALKIN' POWERHOUSE!

SOMEONE CALL THE PRECINCT--ALERT THE FF!

MOVE IT, YOU GUYS!

HE'S TOO STRONG--TOO DANGEROUS! WE CAN'T STOP HIM!

OPEN FIRE!

IT'S NO USE! OUR SHELLS JUST BOUNCE OFF HIM!

LOOK! HE'S MOVING FASTER--PICKING UP SPEED!

THE ONE--WHO GAVE ME LIFE--PROGRAMMED ME TO RESPOND--TO A GUIDING SIGNAL!

SOMEWHERE IN THIS CITY--THERE IS SUCH A SIGNAL! I MUST FIND IT!

BUT, WHERE *IS* IT? WHERE CAN I *FIND* IT?

OUT OF MY *WAY!* STAND ASIDE! NOTHING MUST *STOP* ME!

I MUST FIND THE *GUIDING SIGNAL!*

AND, WHEN IT IS *FOUND--*

I MUST *DESTROY* THE ONE WHO *POSSESSES* IT!

SUCH WAS THE *FINAL COMMAND* OF THE *THINKER--*

AND I ONLY LIVE TO *SERVE--* TO SERVE THE *THINKER --WHO* GAVE ME *LIFE!*

SECONDS LATER, NOT REALIZING THAT HIS MASTER IS NOW IN *PRISON--*NOT REALIZING THAT THE THINKER'S ORDERS HAVE BECOME *MEANINGLESS--*THE *ANDROID MAN* SUCCUMBS TO A SAVAGE PAROXYSM OF BESTIAL *RAGE--!*

THERE IS *NO SIGNAL!*

BUT THERE *MUST* BE A SIGNAL!

WITHOUT IT, MY MISSION CANNOT BE *FULFILLED!*

BUT THEN, SUDDENLY--

I *SENSE* IT AT *LAST!*

THE *THINKER* HAS NOT *FAILED* HIS GREATEST CREATION!

AND, IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT THE *ANDROID MAN* HAS TO DO WITH *THIS* LITTLE SCENE--HANG LOOSE, HERO--WATCH HOW WE WRAP IT UP--!

I'M VERY *HAPPY* FOR YOU, BEN!

I ALWAYS *FELT* THAT REED RICHARDS WOULD FIND A *CURE* FOR YOU SOME DAY!

I WAS BEGINNIN' TO FIGURE HE'D KEEP *BOMBING* OUT!

HEY, WHAT'S *HAPPENIN'* TO US, BABY? WE'RE MAKIN' WITH THE *SMALL TALK* LIKE A COUPLE'A *STRANGERS!*

I DON'T *KNOW*, BEN! SOMEHOW --EVERYTHING SEEMS *DIFFERENT* NOW!

BUT, I'M STILL THE *SAME GUY*, HONEY! --EVEN THOUGH I *LOOK* DIFFERENT!

LET ME *FEEL* YOUR FACE, BEN!

YOUR FEATURES HAVE A RUGGED *HANDSOMENESS!*

BUT I DON'T *GRAB* YA-- LIKE THE *THING* DID! I CAN *TELL* BY YOUR TOUCH!

BEN, WHAT IS THAT SOFT *BUZZING* SOUND I HEAR?

HUH? OH, IT MUST BE COMIN' FROM THIS *BOX* I BROUGHT WITH ME!

IT CONTAINS A PAIR OF GIMMICKY *GLOVES* THAT THE *WIZARD* TRIED TO *ATTACK* US WITH!

Y'KNOW, YOU'RE *RIGHT*, HONEY! THE BLAMED THINGS SOUND LIKE THEY'RE *ALIVE!*

MUST HAVE SOME KINDA *ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS* IN 'EM!

I HAVE FOUND THE SIGNAL!

HOLY COW!

WHAT IN BLUE BLAZES IS THIS?!!

IT IS YOU WHO POSSESS IT!

AND SO-- IT IS YOU WHO MUST-- DIE!

UHHH--!

NOBODY CAN PUNCH LIKE THAT!

NOBODY HUMAN, THAT IS!

BUT--ALICIA! WHERE IS ALICIA?

SHE CAN'T SEE! SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING!

SHE PICKED UP THE BOX-- WITH THE GLOVES IN IT!

NOW HE'S TURNING AWAY FROM ME! HE'S HEADING TOWARDS--HER!

IT'S THE BOX HE'S AFTER--IT MUST BE!

ALICIA-- PUT IT DOWN, HONEY! DROP IT!

BEN! WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT'S WRONG?

I--I CAN'T UNDERSTAND-- ALL THIS NOISE AND CONFUSION!

IF-- ONLY I COULD-- SEE!

THE GUIDING SIGNAL HAS LED ME TO YOU!

ALICIA! DON'T WORRY--I'LL HANDLE 'IM, BABY --NO MATTER WHAT!

NO!! DON'T! LET ME GO--!

I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE-- OR HOW STRONG YA ARE!

I NEVER MET ANYTHING I COULDN'T HANDLE --AND THAT GOES FOR YOU, CREEP-- IN SPADES!

YOUR BLOWS ARE LIKE-- THE PATHETIC THRASHING OF--A FLEA!

I AINT GOT THE THING'S STRENGTH ANY MORE--

BUT I STILL GOT THE KNOW-HOW FROM A THOUSAND BATTLES--!

I'LL STILL FIND A WAY TO TAKE 'IM BY SURPRISE--

LIKE BUTTIN' HIM HARD ENOUGH TO GET 'IM OFF-BALANCE!

NOW--WHILE HE'S STAGGERING BACK--IF I CAN JUST NAIL 'IM WITH A SOLID ONE-TWO--!

THERE! IF THAT DON'T ROCK 'IM--!

IT'S--NO USE! HE DIDN'T EVEN FEEL IT!

HE'S RIPPIN' THAT POST FROM UNDER THE CEILING--LIKE IT'S AN OVERGROWN TOOTHPICK!

ZKRAK

DON'T YOU REALIZE I CANNOT BE STOPPED!

CAN'T YOU SEE THE THINKER HAS MADE ME--INVINCIBLE!

THE THINKER! BUT--HE'S IN JAIL! WHAT CAN--HEY!!

THE WAY HE RAMMED THAT POST THRU THE WALL--HOW STRONG IS HE?

FA

WE-WE'RE SAVED! HERE COME THE POLICE!

OKAY, BIG MAN! HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

IT'S ONLY ONE GUY--!

HOW DID HE CAUSE ALL THIS DAMAGE?

WATCH! I AM ABOUT TO SHOW YOU--!

HAH! THAT WILL PIN THEM THERE!

BY THE TIME THEY REACH ME--MY TASK WILL BE DONE!

NOW, I MUST RETURN TO THE *FEMALE*, AND CONCLUDE MY MISSION!

OVER MY DEAD BODY YA WILL, MISTER!

NO MATTER *HOW* STRONG HE IS--I *GOTTA* KEEP 'IM FROM *ALICIA!*

WHAT? THE LITTLE HUMAN *GNAT* DARES TO AGAIN ATTACK *ME?!!*

WHY DO YOU FORCE ME TO *BATTER* YOU REPEATEDLY?

I AM NOT *CONCERNED* WITH YOU-- ONLY WITH THE *GIRL!*

--THOUGH I DO NOT KNOW *WHY* THE THINKER WOULD WASTE *MY POWER* ON SO HELPLESS A BEING!

JUST AS I DO NOT KNOW WHY *ONE* HUMAN WILL SACRIFICE HIMSELF FOR *ANOTHER!*

TO ME, *ALL* IS MADNESS!

I HAVE MY *COMMAND*-- AND I *OBEY!*

FOR *ME*-- THAT IS *ENOUGH!*

I DO NOT *QUESTION!* I DO NOT *FEEL!* I LEAVE THAT FOR *LESSER* BEINGS-- FOR *HUMANS!*

CAN'T--TAKE MUCH MORE! --HAVEN'T A CHANCE--!

BEN! WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT HAS HE DONE TO YOU??

DON'T WORRY, BABY--I'LL MAKE IT!

I GOTTA MAKE IT-- FOR YOUR SAKE!

BUT--BEN GRIMM AIN'T GOT A PRAYER!

ONLY THE THING-- CAN TAKE 'IM!

EVEN IF IT MEANS --I'LL NEVER BE HUMAN AGAIN-- LIKE REED SAID-- I GOTTA DO IT! --FOR ALICIA!

SHE--FAINTED! BUT MAYBE-- IT'S BETTER THAT WAY-- IN CASE-- I DON'T MAKE IT!

THE WONDER GLOVES! THEY'RE-- WHAT I NEED--!

IT TOOK--A SUDDEN, GIANT SURGE OF ENERGY--TO TURN ME BACK TO--BEN GRIMM!

THE ONLY WAY-- TO REVERSE THE PROCESS--HAS GOTTA BE-- ANOTHER SUCH SHOCK!

I JUST HAVETA HOPE-- THESE WONDER GLOVES-- HAVE ENOUGH POWER-- TO DO THE TRICK!

HE'S HEADIN' TOWARDS ME! I WON'T GET-- A SECOND CHANCE--!

NOW-- IF IT WORKS-- IT'S GOODBYE TO BEN GRIMM-- FOREVER!

AND IT'S GOTTA WORK-- FOR ALICIA!

CLICK!

I DID IT! I'M THE THING AGAIN!

COME 'N *GIT* IT, KILLER--

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

COMPLIMENTS OF THE BLUE-EYED *THING!*

NOW I AINT GONNA NEED ***THEM*** NO MORE--

'CAUSE WHAT I'M GONNA DO TO *YOU*--

I'M GONNA DO WITH MY OWN DAINTY, LITTLE ORANGE *PAW*--

SEE WHAT I MEAN?

MEANWHILE, A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE HEART OF TOWN, WE FIND--

JOHNNY STORM! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE ME DRIVE BACK ALONE?!!

DON'T *WANNA* DO IT, CRYS--BUT YOU *HEARD* THAT NEWS BULLETIN!

IF BEN'S IN *TROUBLE*, I'VE GOTTA *GO* TO HIM!!

JUST DRIVE *CAREFULLY*, HONEY--

REMEMBER--THAT LITTLE VOOMIN' 'VET ISN'T EVEN *PAID* FOR YET!

NOW DON'T *APPLAUD*--PLEASE! IT MAKES ME *BLUSH*!

BE *CAREFUL*, JOHNNY--MY DARLING!

IF BEN'S IN A JAM--HE'LL *NEED* ME! HE HASN'T THE *THING'S* STRENGTH TO GET HIM THRU!

AND I'M JUST NOT ABOUT TO LET HIM *DOWN*!

WHATEVER HAPPENED--IT'S *STILL* GOING ON!

THE *POLICE* ARE STILL *BREAKING IN*!

MOVE IT, MEN! I'LL GET YOU IN--BUT *FAST*!

STAND ASIDE, BOYS! LET THE *TORCH* HAVE A CRACK AT IT!

LET'S HOPE HE'S NOT *TOO LATE*!

ANYTHING COULD HAVE HAPPENED BY *NOW*!

HOW--CAN YOU GENERATE SO MUCH *HEAT*-- SO *FAST*??

BETTER SHIELD YOUR *EYES*, SARGE--!

I'M GONNA *INCREASE* THE INTENSITY --TILL I REACH *BEN*!

FINALLY--

BEN! *ALICIA*! YOU'RE ALL *RIGHT*!

BUT-- YOU'RE THE *THING* AGAIN!

HI, JUNIOR!

ALL SET FER THE *MARSH-MALLOW ROAST*?

HE SAVED US *ALL*, JOHNNY!

SO *THIS* IS WHAT YOU WERE UP AGAINST!

LOOKS LIKE A SUPER-POWERFUL *ANDROID*!

BUT NOT POWERFUL *ENOUGH*-- FOR THE *THING*!

HE MUSTA BEEN THE LAST LITTLE PLAY-MATE THE *THINKER* DREAMED UP BEFORE THEY SLAPPED 'IM IN THE COOLER!

BEN! I JUST REMEMBERED --WHAT *REED* SAID--!

HE GOT OUTTA *CONTROL* SOMEHOW --BUT HE AINT GONNA BOTHER NO ONE *AGAIN*! *THAT'S* FER SURE!

Y'MEAN-- ABOUT ME *CHANGIN'* AGAIN?

HE SAID--IF YOU EVER CHANGE BACK TO THE *THING*--YOU'LL *REMAIN* THAT WAY--*ALWAYS*!

OH *NO*, JOHNNY-- *NO*!

DON'T LET IT *BUG* YA, BABY!

IT'S--JUST THE WAY-- I *PLANNED* IT--!

BEN!

WHY SHOULD I BE A NOWHERE *NOBODY*-- LIKE PLAIN *BEN GRIMM*--?

--WHEN I CAN BE-- THE *THING*--

--FOREVER...!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

GUEST STARRING: WYATT WING-FOOT!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

12¢ IND. 80 NOV

"RETAILERS: See page 32 for special display allowance plan."

DESPERATELY, THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR MUST GO...

WHERE TREADS THE LIVING TOTEM!

HEY, BLUE-EYES! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HELPING ME!

WE'VE GOTTA KEEP THIS PLACE CLEAN WHILE SUE'S IN THE HOSPITAL!

I'M HELPIN'--- I'M HELPIN'!

I'M STAYIN' OUTTA YER WAY, AIN'T I?

THAT'S HELPIN'!

ANYHOW, THIS LETTER'S FROM OL' WYATT WINGFOOT!

SO SHUT YER FACE 'N I'LL READ IT TO YA!

WELCOME TO THE GRANDEUR THAT IS MARVEL, PROUDLY PRODUCED BY:

STAN (THE MAN) LEE and JACK (KING) KIRBY

EMBELLISHMENT: JOE SINNOTT

LETTERING: SAM ROSEN

FROM **WYATT!** WHY DIDN'T YOU **SAY** SO?

BEATS **ME!** FAR AS I CAN TELL, THE KID'S GOT **TROUBLES!**

WHAT'S THAT ROVIN', RED-SKINNED MASS OF MUSCLE UP TO **NOW?**

JOHNNY STORM! I THOUGHT YOU AND BENJAMIN WERE **TIDYING UP!**

HOLD IT, CRYS! WE'VE JUST GOTTA READ THIS LETTER FROM **WYATT** FIRST!

WYATT WINGFOOT? YOU HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HIM IN **AGES!**

WHERE IS HE SPENDING HIS **VACATION** THIS SUMMER?

LOOKS LIKE HE'S GONE BACK TO THE **RESERVATION**--- TO VISIT HIS **PEOPLE!**

BUT I DON'T GET ALL THIS JAZZ ABOUT **EVIL SPIRITS**---OR ABOUT A **LIVING TOTEM!**

IS HE PUTTING ME **ON,** OR **WHAT?**

HE AIN'T EXACTLY A **PRACTICAL JOKER!**

I'M BETTIN' THERE'S SOME-THIN' **WRONG** OUT THERE!

WELL, WE'RE NOT BUSY SAVING THE **WORLD** RIGHT NOW---

SO WHY DON'T WE PAY HIM A **VISIT?**

I'M GAME, JUNIOR!

BUT OL' **STRETCHO** WON'T WANNA LEAVE YER **SISTER** AT A TIME LIKE THIS!

YA'D THINK **HE** WUZ HAVIN' THE BABY **HIM-SELF!**

AW, COME **OFF** IT, BEN! AFTER ALL, IT'S THEIR **FIRST...**

OH! HI, REED!

HI, GROUP! IF WYATT'S IN **TROUBLE,** LET'S START **PACKING!** WHAT ARE YOU **WAITING** FOR?

BUT...WHAT ABOUT **SUSIE?**

THE DOCTOR SAID IT'LL BE AT LEAST A *WEEK* BEFORE THE BABY ARRIVES...

AND HE SUGGESTED I STOP *HAUNTING THE HOSPITAL*, TO USE HIS OWN WORDS!

SO A TRIP OUT *WEST* MIGHT BE JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR *ORDERED!*

HOT ZIGGETTY!

WALTZ ME *AROUND* AGAIN WILLIE! LET'S PUT THE *CAT* AWAY---'CAUSE WE'RE GOIN' THATAWAY!

HEY! WATCH IT, YOU BIG *OX!*

I'M NOT MADE OUT OF *ORANGE COBBLESTONES* ... LIKE *SOME* CLOWNS I KNOW!

IT MAY BE A VACATION FOR *YOU,* BLUE EYES--

BUT *I'LL* HAVETA LEAVE *CRYSTAL!* SHE'S GOTTA *STAY,* IN CASE *SUE* NEEDS HER!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT *ME,* JOHNNY! *I* CAN KEEP *BUSY!*

THAT'S WHAT I'M *WORRIED* ABOUT!

AND NOW, SINCE THERE'S NO NEED TO BORE YOU WITH THE DETAILS OF OUR FRIENDS' *PACKING*, LET'S VISIT AN ISOLATED *DESERT REGION* OUT WEST, WHERE WE FIND ---

THIS *GYRO-CRUISER* WHICH THE *BLACK PANTHER* ONCE GAVE JOHNNY AND ME* SURE COMES IN HANDY *NOW!*

IT WOULD TAKE *DAYS* TO COVER THIS SAME TERRAIN ON *HORSEBACK!*

*IT SEEMS LIKE AN *ETERNITY* AGO, BUT IT WAS ONLY IN ISH #54 ---REMEMBER? --- *STATISTICAL STAN.*

I SURE *MISS* THE *TORCH*--- AND THE *OTHER* MEMBERS OF THE *FF!*

THOSE FEW MONTHS I SPENT *WITH* THEM WERE AMONG THE *HAPPIEST* OF MY LIFE!

BUT I'D BETTER *CON-CENTRATE* ON THE JOB AT HAND *NOW!*

EVER SINCE I RETURNED TO THE TRIBE, THE *MEDICINE MEN* HAVE BEEN WHISPERING ABOUT THE OLD *LEGENDS* ---

THEY CLAIM THE *TOTEM* LIVES AGAIN!

I *KNOW* IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! I *KNOW* IT CAN'T--- *WAIT!*

WHAT'S *THAT??*

IT SOUNDS LIKE---*GIANT FOOTSTEPS!*

THE *GROUND*--- IT'S BEGINNING TO *HEAVE!*

THE ENTIRE *MOUNTAIN* IS TREMBLING --- *SHAKING*---AS THOUGH IT'S COMING *APART!*

IT ISN'T AN *EARTHQUAKE*--- AND YET---

WHAT CAN IT BE??

THE EARTH IS SPLITTING ASUNDER...

MOLTEN FIRE...FROM BELOW... ENGULFING THE CRUISER!!

ONLY THE HOVER GEAR CAN SAVE ME... IF I APPLY IT IN TIME..!

SW

I'VE GOT TO MAKE IT...TO THE LEDGE OF THE CLIFF!

SECONDS LATER...

I WAS LUCKY!

LUCKIER, PERHAPS, THAN I DESERVE!

THE GYRO-CRUISER WITHSTOOD THE SEARING HEAT...

BUT, THE GIANT FOOTSTEPS ...ARE COMING ...STILL CLOSER..!

ABOVE ME..!

THERE'S SOMETHING ENORMOUS... MOVING UP THERE!

WHATEVER THE RISK... I HAVE TO SEE IT!

WHO DARES APPROACH THE LIVING PRESENCE OF... TOMAZOOMA, THE TOTEM WHO WALKS??

MY SLEEP OF AGES NOW IS ENDED! THOSE WHO CREATED ME MUST DIE!

SO SPEAKS TOMAZOOMA!

TOMAZOOMA --- THE DEATH THAT WALKS!

NO! IT IS MADNESS! IT CANNOT BE!

AND, EVEN AS WYATT WINGFOOT CRIES OUT IN ALARM...

HOW COME WE DIDN'T TAKE US A *REGULAR* JET...

SO'S WE COULD GIVE THEM *STEWARDESSES* A THRILL?

OUR *POGO PLANE* IS MORE *MANEUVER-ABLE*, BEN...

STEWARDESSES NOTWITHSTANDING!

WHAT'S WITH THE *MANEUVERABLE* BIT, PAL?

YOU FIGGERIN' ON SOME *DOG FIGHTS* WITH THE RED BARON, OR SOMETHIN'?

NOT *EXACTLY*, MR. GRIMM!

BUT, I'M GUESSING OUR LITTLE TRIP WILL TAKE US *FAR AFIELD* OF THE AIRLINES' *REGULAR* ROUTES!

ALSO, NOW THAT WE'VE *REACHED* THE GENERAL AREA...

WE CAN SLACKEN *SPEED* ...AND REDUCE *ALTITUDE* ENOUGH TO SCOUT AROUND!

TRY DOING *THIS* ON A SCHEDULED FLIGHT!

CAN'T YOU EVER *ANSWER* A GUY WITHOUT DELIVERIN' A BLASTED *SPEECH*??

CAREFUL, BEN! THE ANSWER TO *THAT* ONE MAY BE *ANOTHER* SPEECH!

FLAME ON!

GOOD *BOY*, JOHNNY! SEE IF YOU CAN LOCATE WYATT'S *TRIBE*!

BOY! WHAT *SCENERY!*

BUT, WHERE AM I GONNA FIND *WYATT*?

SHOCK BLAST SHOTS... COMING FROM BELOW!

I DON'T KNOW WHO THEY ARE...

BUT, IT'S A CINCH THEY'RE NOT MEMBERS OF MY FAN CLUB!

HE WHO FLIES WITH FIRE IS TOO SWIFT FOR US, O SILENT FOX!

IT IS A DEMON OF FLAME...SENT BY MIGHTY TOMAZOOMA... TO DESTROY US!

NOW WILL MY GRANDSON... WYATT WINGFOOT ---DOUBT HIS PEOPLE NO LONGER!

THOSE INDIANS DOWN BELOW... THEY'RE THE ONES!

BUT THESE SIZZLIN' FIRE-BALLS WILL SCARE THEM OFF!

IT WORKED! THEY'RE HIGH-TAILIN' IT FOR HOME..!

ALL EXCEPT THE OLD ONE WHO'S STANDING HIS GROUND LIKE A BORN CHIEFTAIN!

DO WHAT YOU *WILL*... SILENT FOX FEARS YOU *NOT!*

MY PEOPLE WILL NOT FALTER... THOUGH *TOMAZOOMA* WALKS AGAIN!

SILENT FOX! I'VE HEARD WYATT *SPEAK* OF YOU!

BUT, WHO IS *TOMAZOOMA?*

THE *LIVING TOTEM!* THE *WALKING DEATH!*

FASTER, STRETCH! IF THE KID'S IN *TROUBLE..!*

I SEE HIM *STAND-ING* THERE... JUST AHEAD!

THIS IS WYATT'S *GRANDFATHER*... CHIEF *SILENT FOX!*

HE SAYS WE'RE *TOO LATE!* WYATT HAS ALREADY GONE IN SEARCH OF *TOMAZOOMA!*

TOMAZOOMA! THE MOST *FEAR-FUL* LEGEND OF ALL!

AT THAT MOMENT, AS THOUGH TO LEND DEADLY *EMPHASIS* TO REED RICHARDS' WORDS...

MY GUN IS *USE-LESS!!* I CANNOT *STOP* HIM!

HE'S TRYING TO *BURY* ME... BENEATH THE CRUMBLING *CLIFF!*

I CAN DO NOTHING *HERE!*

BUT I MUST *ESCAPE*...I MUST *RETURN* ---TO WARN MY *PEOPLE!*

NONE CAN FLEE THE LIVING TOTEM!

TO SEE *TOMAZOOMA* IS TO DIE!

THE *SHIP!* IF ONLY I CAN REACH THE *SHIP..!*

ONLY THE FOOL SEEKS REFUGE IN FLIGHT...

...*WHEN* THERE CAN *BE* NO FLIGHT...

...*NO* FLIGHT FROM THE *VAPORS* OF THE LIVING TOTEM!

SHOOSH!

NO! I MUSTN'T LET THE GAS OVERCOME ME!

THERE IS...TOO MUCH... AT STAKE..!

I MUSTN'T...BLACK OUT!! ...MUST HOLD ON...JUST A FEW SECONDS...LONGER..!

ONCE INSIDE... THE SHIP...I CAN ...ESCAPE!

I CAN'T ...I WON'T... FAIL SILENT FOX...OR ...MY PEOPLE!

WHILE, BACK ON THE PLAIN ---

THOUGH YOU FOLLOW THE CUSTOMS OF THE PAST...YOU POSSESS MODERN WEAPONRY ---MODERN MACHINES!

HOW DID YOU OBTAIN THEM, SILENT FOX?

I'D RATHER YAK ABOUT THAT BLASTED TOTEM!

LET'S LET REED HANDLE THIS, BEN!

MY TRIBE POSSESSES ALMOST LIMITLESS WEALTH...BECAUSE OF THE VAST SUPPLY OF OIL BENEATH OUR LAND!

OUR LAND IS WORTH BILLIONS ...BUT WE WILL NEVER SELL IT...FOR IT IS OUR HOME!

THE RED STAR OIL COMPANY WILL NEVER OWN THIS LAND!

HERE WE WERE BORN... AND HERE WILL WE DIE!

THE RED STAR COMPANY? BUT, THEY'RE CONTROLLED FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN!

NO MATTER! SILENT FOX HAS SPOKEN TRUE! THIS LAND IS OURS!

AND, IF ALL ELSE FAILS, THERE IS TOMAZOOMA... TO PROTECT US!

PROTECT YA? SOUNDS TO ME MORE LIKE HE'S OUT TO DEMOLISH YA!

HEY! WHAT WUZ THAT?

SOME KINDA EXPLOSION... 'WAY OUT BEYOND THAT RIDGE!

ALL THAT FLAME... THAT NOISE! WHAT CAN IT BE?

ONLY A BLAZING OIL FIELD COULD CAUSE SUCH AN INFERNO!

THE TOTEM... WALKS AGAIN!

I BETTER HEAD FOR THE SPOT... LIKE ***NOW!***

YOU TWO CAN FOLLOW IN THE ***POGO PLANE!***

THAT'S MIGHTY ***NICE!*** A YA!

SINCE WHEN DID ***YOU*** GIT ELECTED ***BOSS*** OF THIS BLASTED TEAM?

KNOCK IT OFF, BEN!

IF YOU'RE OUT FOR A ***FIGHT,*** I'VE A HUNCH YOU'LL SOON GET YOUR ***WISH!***

NOW LET'S REACH THAT ***PLANE..*** FAST!

REED WAS ***RIGHT!***

ONE OF SILENT FOX'S ENTIRE OIL FIELDS IS ***ABLAZE!***

I'LL USE MY ***OWN*** FIRE POWER TO GATHER THE FLAMES AND THEN ***EXTINGUISH*** THEM!

BUT WHAT ABOUT ***WYATT?*** I HOPE THE BIG FELLA'S ***OKAY!***

UH OH! SOME-THING'S ***WRONG!***

THE RIGGERS ***SEE*** SOMETHING THAT ***FRIGHTENS*** THEM!

THEY'RE RUNNING IN ***PANIC!***

FLAMIN' FIRE-BALLS!

SOMETHING PICKED UP THAT ***TANK CAR***---AND TOSSED IT LIKE A ***TOY!***

IT JUST BARELY ***MISSED*** ME!

BUT ***WHAT??*** ***HOW??***

THERE'S THE ANSWER--- DOWN ***BELOW..!***

IT MUST BE... ***TOMAZOOMA!***

I'VE JUST TIME TO *MELT* THAT TRACTOR... BEFORE HE CAN *HURL* IT!

HE *SEES* ME... AND DOESN'T *LIKE* WHAT HE SEES!

OH *NO!!* TWIN *ELECTRO-BEAMS...* SHOOTING OUT FROM HIS *EYES!!*

THE *SHOCK BLAST...* PENETRATING MY *FLAME---*

EVERYTHING GOING BLACK... I--I'M LOSING *CONSCIOUSNESS!*

BUT...WITH MY FLAME *OUT...* IF I *FALL...* FROM THIS *HEIGHT...!*

JOHNNY!

YA GOT 'IM!

WE WEREN'T A *SECOND* TOO SOON, BEN!

KEEP 'ER *STEADY*, STRETCH!

I'LL GIT THE KID!

HURRY, BEN!

CAN'T... BEAR THE *WEIGHT*... MUCH LONGER!

OKAY, PAL... THE HALF-PINT'S *SAFE!*

SO HEAD THIS TUB FER THAT CRUMMY *TOTEM!*

WE'VE GOT TO BE *CAREFUL*, BEN!

THERE'S *MORE* TO IT THAN MEETS THE *EYE!*

NUTS!

YOU'D SAY THAT IF I WAS TACKLIN' A KID IN A *PLAYPEN!*

THAT'S *IT*, MISTER...KEEP 'ER RIGHT ON *COURSE*, 'CAUSE...

IT'S...

CLOBBERIN' TIME!

...AND JUST IN CASE YA DIDN'T GIT THE *MESSAGE*, SWEETIE...

HEY! I DON'T *GET* IT!

IT FEELS LIKE I'M WHUMPIN' A HUNK'A SOLID *STEEL!*

WHAT WUZ THAT *CLICK?* LIKE AN AUTOMATIC *SWITCH* BEIN' THROWED!

SOME KINDA *POWER BLASTS* ...SHOOTIN' ME OFF'A HIS *BACK!*

HEY, *STRETCHO!!* COME'N *GIT* ME!

BUT, BEFORE THE TINY *POGO PLANE* CAN CIRCLE BACK TO THE SPOT...

IT'S...A GOOD THING... I WUZN'T HOLDIN' MY *BREATH* ...WAITIN'!!

SHEEESH! NOW I KNOW... HOW *HUMPTY DUMPTY*... MUSTA FELT!

THERE'S BEN! I *SEE* HIM DOWN BELOW!

UH OH! HE HEARS THE *PLANE!* HE'S *TURNIN'*--!

LUCKILY, HE WAS *STRONG* ENOUGH TO SURVIVE THAT FALL...

BUT *TOMAZOOMA* IS FAR TOO *DANGER-OUS* TO GET A SECOND CHANCE!

MY GUN-FIRE DOESN'T *AFFECT* HIM! HE'S JUST *STANDING* THERE!

HIS BODY IS *GLOWING*... BEING CHARGED WITH...*NEGATIVE ENERGY!!*

...ENERGY ENOUGH TO HURL THE SHELLS *BACK* AT ME!

THEY'RE *RIPPING* THRU THE *PLANE..!*

SHE'S GOING... OUT OF *CONTROL..!*

SKRAKK!

MEANWHILE...ON ANOTHER PART OF THE GREAT, ROLLING PLAIN---

GRAND-FATHER!! THE TOTEM LIVES! I HAVE SEEN IT! I HAVE FELT ITS POWER!

BUT, IT IS NOT OUR PRO-TECTOR!

IT SEEKS TO DESTROY US!

YOU MUST NOT SPEAK SUCH WORDS, MY SON!

WE MUST NEVER LOSE FAITH IN THE MIGHTY TOMAZOOMA!

BUT THIS ISN'T TOMAZOOMA! HE'S JUST A LEGEND! THERE IS NO TOMAZOOMA!

THIS IS AN EVIL MACHINE... BUILT BY SOME DEADLY ENEMY!

A MACHINE... TO DRIVE US FROM OUR LAND!

FOR MANY MOONS... THE RED STAR OIL COMPANY HAS TRIED TO TAKE THIS LAND!

NOW, SILENT FOX KNOWS WHAT HE MUST DO--!

YOU... HAVE CALLED WASHINGTON... ON THAT SMALL, WIRELESS TRANSCEIVER?

DOES IT SURPRISE THE SON OF MY SON THAT THIS ELDERLY ONE HAS MASTERED SUCH DEVICES?

NO MATTER!

SILENT FOX HAS LEARNED WHAT HE MUST KNOW!

THE RED STAR OIL COMPANY HAS BEEN ORDERED AWAY FROM THESE SHORES!

THEY WERE TRULY AGENTS OF ANOTHER POWER!

THE FALSE TOTEM WAS INDEED THEIR OWN EVIL HANDIWORK!

BUT, I REFUSED ALL MILITARY AID... ALL ASSISTANCE FROM THE PENTAGON--!

WE OURSELVES MUST DESTROY THE MONSTER THAT WALKS OUR LAND!

EVEN NOW, OUR WARRIORS GATHER...

WITH THE COURAGE OF OUR FOREFATHERS... ...WITH THE ARMAMENTS AND SKILL OF THE MODERN PALEFACE!

BUT, WHILE THE ASSEMBLING BRAVES PREPARE FOR BATTLE...

IT CALLS ITSELF... *TOMAZOOMA!* BUT, WHAT *IS* IT, REED?

WHAT IS IT... *REALLY?*

A GIGANTIC, MULTI-POWERED *ROBOT,* JOHNNY... BUILT FOR ONLY *ONE* PURPOSE..!

TO GAIN POSSESSION OF THIS OIL-RICH *LAND!*

THE ONES WHO *BUILT* IT HOPED TO *DECEIVE* THE INDIANS...

TO CONVINCE THEM IT WAS TOMAZOOMA'S *WILL!*

DON'T YOU *EVER* STOP WITH THE CORNY *LECTURES,* MISTER?

NEXT, YA'LL BE HANDIN' OUT *REPORT CARDS!*

HOWEVER, MINUTES LATER, ALL ELSE IS *FORGOTTEN,* AS THE FLYING *HUMAN TORCH* FINALLY SIGHTS...

THE *TOTEM*... HEADING FOR THE BIG GULLY *DAM!*

IF HE *SMASHES* IT, IT COULD *DROWN* EVERY LIVING BEING FOR *MILES* AROUND!

WHEN IN *ROME,* DO AS THE *ROMANS* DO!

AND, SINCE I'M OUT *WEST* ...I'LL TRY TO STOP IT WITH A FLAMING *LASSO...!*

BULL'S EYE!

THAT OUGHTTA HOLD HIM LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO *THINK* OF SOMETHING!

GANGWAY, STRETCHO! I'M GONNA *PLOW INTO* 'IM AGAIN!

DON'T *DO* IT, BEN! IT'S A WASTE OF *TIME!*

HE'S *TOO POWER-FUL*... EVEN FOR *YOU!*

OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO FIND HIS *POWER SOURCE*... AND *DESTROY* IT... BEFORE HE CAN *STOP* US!

EXCEPT FOR WRECKING HIS *SPEECH MECHANISM* DURING YOUR LAST ATTACK, WE HAVEN'T EVEN PUT A *DENT* IN... *WAIT!*

LOOK... OVER THAT RIDGE... IT'S *SILENT FOX*... LEADING A *WAR PARTY*... SPEEDING TOWARDS THE TOTEM IN MECHANIZED *SAND BUGGIES!*

AND THERE'S *WYATT WINGFOOT,* RIDING ALONG *WITH* THEM!

NUTS! ALL WE NEED *NOW* IS *JOHN WAYNE* 'N A FEW THOUSAND *EXTRAS!*

I THOUGHT THIS WUZ GONNA BE *OUR* FIGHT!

YOU'LL GET ALL THE ACTION YOU *WANT!*

CHIEF! DON'T COME ANY *CLOSER!* HE'S TOO *DANGEROUS!*

IT'S NO USE! THEY CAN'T *HEAR* ME!

THERE HE *IS,* MY GRANDFATHER... THE ONE WE *SEEK!*

THEN WE *ATTACK!* THE MONSTER MUST BE *SLAIN!*

DEATH TO THE *FALSE* TOMAZOOMA!

WE SHALL *FIGHT*... AND *DIE* IF WE MUST!

WE SHALL BE WORTHY OF... OUR *HERITAGE!*

BUT, THOUGH THE RED-MEN BATTLE LIKE WARRIORS BORN...

OUR WEAPONS ARE *USELESS!* HIS *ARMOR* WITH-STANDS THE *STRONGEST* SHELL!

THEY'RE LIKE *TERRIERS* ...ATTACKING A *DINOSAUR!*

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF *TIME*... BEFORE HE DESTROYS THEM *ALL!*

THERE'S ONLY *ONE WAY*... TO *SAVE* THEM..!

WYATT! DO EXACTLY WHAT I SAY!
THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN!
DO YOU HAVE A PORTABLE BAZOOKA WITHIN REACH?
YES! RIGHT THERE---IN BACK OF THE BUGGY!
THEN GET IT, MAN!
BUT, WE'VE ALREADY TRIED IT!
THE SHELLS JUST BOUNCE OFF HIM!
YOU'RE NOT FIRING A SHELL..!
THIS TIME YOU'LL FIRE... ME!
I'VE GOT TO MAKE MY BODY SMALLER... MORE COMPACT... THAN EVER BEFORE!
THAT'S THE REASON FOR SPEED...
I CAN'T STAND THE STRAIN...OF SUCH INTENSE COMPRESSION ---MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS!
QUICKLY! LIFT ME UP... GENTLY... GENTLY!
NOW, LAUNCH ME...RIGHT AT THE OPENING BENEATH THE TOTEM'S EYES!
TAKE THE MOST CAREFUL AIM...
FOR, IF YOU SHOULD MISS...
WYATT WINGFOOT WILL NOT MISS!
SHOOM!
HE DID IT!
MY GAMBLE PAID OFF! HIS POWER PACK IS LOCATED RIGHT HERE!
NOW, IF I CAN JUST SHORT CIRCUIT IT BEFORE HE CAN REPEL ME..!

BUKOOOM!

HE *SAVED* US! THE TOTEM IS *DESTROYED!*

YEAH--- BUT I'M HOPIN' HE DIDN'T TAKE MY BUDDY *WITH* 'IM!

STAY BACK! I'M GITTIN' REED *OUTTA* THERE!

EASY, BEN! NO NEED TO *RUSH* NOW!

SONUVA-GUN, STRETCHO! YER *OKAY!*

HEY, FLAME OFF, HOTSHOT! THE PARTY'S *OVER!*

GIT *WITH* IT, LONGLEGS!

NO, BEN! THEY'LL HAVE NO HEART FOR *CELEBRATING!*

THEY'LL PRO-BABLY WANT-CHA TO JOIN 'EM IN A *VICTORY DANCE* AFTER THIS!

AFTER ALL... FOR THEM A *LEGEND* HAS DIED!

MIGHTY *TOMAZOOMA* HAS *FAILED* THEM!

YOUR *COURAGE*.. YOUR *WISDOM,* ARE GREATER THAN ANY THESE EYES HAVE EVER SEEN!

BUT THERE ARE *MANY* THINGS THE PALEFACE CANNOT *KNOW!*

THE TOTEM THAT WALKS STILL *LIVES!*

IT DID *NOT* FAIL US!

BEHOLD!! TOMAZOOMA WAS *HERE*... READY TO *DESTROY* THE MONSTER..

BUT, THANKS TO *YOU* --HE WAS NOT *NEEDED!*

I..I *DO* SEE SOMETHING... SOMETHING *GIGANTIC*... FADING INTO THE MIST!

WADDAYA *THINK,* BIG BRAIN? *IS* IT THE REAL TOMAZOOMA...OR WHAT?

NOW, HE *RETURNS* TO THE MYSTIC HUNTING GROUND BEYOND THE FARTHEST HORIZON!

AND THERE SHALL HE *REMAIN*... TILL WE SUM-MON HIM AGAIN!

WE'LL NEVER TRULY *KNOW,* BEN...

AND PERHAPS IT'S JUST AS WELL!

YES, MY FRIENDS!

CIVILIZED MAN IS MORE *SECURE* IN THE BELIEF THAT *LEGENDS* DO NOT COME TRUE!

FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL

TWICE AS MANY PAGES!

TWICE AS MANY THRILLS!

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

25¢ IND. | 6 NOV

KING-SIZE SPECIAL!

Fantastic Four

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

LET THERE BE .. LIFE!

THE FABULOUS F.F. FIGHT A FIGHT THAT CAN'T BE WON!

LET THERE BE... LIFE!

WAY-OUT WONDERMENT AS NONE BUT STAN (THE MAN) LEE and JACK (KING) KIRBY COULD CREATE IT!

EMBELLISHED BY: JOE SINNOTT
LETTERED BY: SAM ROSEN

A SPECTACULAR MOVIE-LENGTH EPIC COMPLETE IN THIS COLLECTORS-ITEM ISSUE!

FEATURING: THE GLORY OF BIRTH, 'NEATH THE SHADOW OF DEATH!

HEY, STRETCHO! WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YA DOIN' HERE?

WE THOUGHT YOU WUZ AT THE HOSPITAL... WITH SUE!

THE DOCTOR SAID THE BABY MIGHT BE BORN AT ANY MINUTE NOW!

SHUT UP! I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING!

UH OH! REED'S MAD! SOMETHING'S WRONG... REAL WRONG!

SINCE YOU BOTH *BARGED IN* THIS WAY, I MIGHT AS WELL *TELL* YOU...!

THE *COSMIC RADIATION*... IS STILL IN HER BLOOD!

SUE IS IN... TERRIBLE *DANGER!*

IT COULD MEAN THAT... BOTH *SHE*...AND THE *BABY*... MIGHT *DIE!*

OH, *NO!* IF YOU *KNEW* IT...ALL THIS TIME... WHY DIDN'T YOU *SAY* SOMETHING??

THEM *PICTURES* YOU'RE STUDYIN'...THEY'RE SHOTS OF THE *NEGATIVE ZONE!*

HOW DOES *THAT* FIGGER IN?

IT'S TOO LATE FOR *TALK*, BOY!

I THINK I'VE *FOUND* THE ANSWER!

THERE'S *ONE* ELEMENT...AND ONE *ALONE*...THAT CAN SAVE THEM *BOTH!*

BUT IT'S ALMOST CERTAIN *DEATH* TO GO THERE... WE *ALL* KNOW THAT!

IT CONSISTS OF *ANTI-MATTER*...FOUND ONLY IN THE *NEGATIVE ZONE!*

IT WAS ONLY A *MIRACLE* THAT GOT YOU OUT ALIVE *LAST* TIME!

THE KID'S *RIGHT*, MISTER!

FORGET IT! WHAT DOES *MY* LIFE MATTER... *NOW?*

HOLD IT, PAL! IF YER *SURE* IT'S THE ONLY WAY TA SAVE SUSIE AND THE BABY...

WE AIN'T GONNA LETCHA COP ALL THE ACTION BY *YERSELF!*

NO! THIS ISN'T A JOB FOR THE *TEAM!* IT'S *PERSONAL!*

I'M NOT LETTING YOU BOTH SACRIFICE *YOUR* LIVES ON MY BEHALF!

WHAT HAVE *YOU* GOT TO DO WITH IT? SHE'S *MY* SISTER, ISN'T SHE?

THAT MAKES IT *MY* JOB, TOO!

BUT, YOU DON'T *UNDER-STAND..!*

THE *HECK* WE DON'T!

I KNOW BLAMED **WELL** IF ANYTHIN' HAPPENS TA **YOU**, I'LL HAVETA GO OUT'N **WORK** FER A LIVIN'!

FACE IT, REED! OUR MINDS ARE **MADE UP!**

BUT **THINK!** THE ODDS ARE **AGAINST** US EVER RETURNING... ALIVE!

SO I GOT ME AN **INVESTMENT** TO PROTECT, HEAR?

NUTS! YOU THINK YER THE **ONLY** ONE WHO TAKES HIS **HERO PILLS?**

LET SOMEONE **ELSE** GRAB SOME **GLORY** FOR A CHANGE, HUH?

OKAY, THEN! WE HAVEN'T EVEN TIME TO **ARGUE!**

PUT THESE **HARNESSES** ON... **FAST!**

I'LL EXPLAIN THEIR **USE** LATER!

I... DON'T KNOW HOW TO **TELL** YOU... HOW I **FEEL** ABOUT WHAT THE TWO OF YOU ARE **DOING!**

DON'T **BOTHER**, BROTHER-IN-LAW! IT'S MORE FUN **GUESSING!**

ANYTHING'S BETTER'N LISTENIN' TO ANOTHER ONE'A YER CORNY **SPEECHES!**

SHEEESH! YOU COME UP WITH MORE NUTTY **GIZMOS--!**

BUT, EVEN AS **REED RICHARDS** MAKES HIS DESPERATE, FINAL **PREPARATIONS**...LIFE **WITHIN** THE NEGATIVE ZONE IS AS SHOCKINGLY **SAVAGE**...AS BRUTALLY, INHUMANLY, **INCOMPREHENSIBLE** AS EVER...

AND, BEHIND THE TURMOIL AND THE TERROR, IS THE LOATHSOME, LETHAL BEING KNOWN ONLY AS... **ANNIHILUS**... HE WHO **ANNIHILATES!**

STRIKING WITHOUT WARNING, WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST VESTIGE OF MERCY, HIS MOTIVES ARE AS CLOAKED IN **MYSTERY** AS THEY ARE COUCHED IN **MENACE--!**

WITHIN SECONDS, WHERE THERE HAD BEEN *LIFE*... ONLY *DEATH* REMAINS!

...WHERE THERE HAD BEEN *CARNAGE*... ONLY *SILENCE!*

SLOWLY, THE AIR-BORNE ENGINE OF DESTRUCTION COMES TO A *HALT*---

...AS A HEAVY, CREAKING *HATCH* IS OPENED ---TO REVEAL, AT LAST...

ANNIHILUS! THE LIVING *DEATH* THAT WALKS!

ONCE *MORE* I AM TRIUMPHANT!

ONCE *MORE* I HAVE PROVEN THAT IN ALL THE *UNIVERSE*, ANNIHILUS STANDS *SUPREME!*

WOE TO HIM WHO COMES MY WAY!

FOR, ONLY BY *DESTROYING* LIFE---CAN *ANNIHILUS* BE FOREVER *REBORN!*

AND, ON THAT CHEERFUL NOTE, WE ONCE AGAIN SWITCH SCENES---

WE'VE PASSED THRU THE MAIN COMPLEX OF *BARRIERS* WHICH I'VE INSTALLED!

NOW, ONLY THIS ONE LAST *CHAMBER* STANDS BETWEEN US ...AND THE *NEGATIVE ZONE!*

SECURE YOUR ANTI-MATTER HARNESSES!

THIS IS IT!

STAY CLOSE TO ME! IF WE GET SEPARATED NOW---!

WE'LL STAY--- WE'LL STAY!

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WITH THE DINERS' CLUB CARD!

THERE! I'VE ACTIVATED THE CIRCUIT... CREATING ANEW THE GATEWAY TO...THE BEYOND!

THE ENERGY IS FLOWING!

PREPARE TO LEAP!

NOW!

WE'RE... GOING THRU... THE BARRIER!

'ZAT SO?

I THOUGHT WE WUZ PLAYIN' HOPSCOTCH!

HEY! WE MADE IT! WE'RE THRU!!

BEN! JOHNNY! DON'T LET THE SIGHTS RATTLE YOU!

WE'RE ENTERING THE INITIAL DISTORTION AREA!

OUR HUMAN VISION NEEDS A FEW MINUTES TO READJUST ITSELF---

...TO CORRECTLY TRANSMIT SUCH ALIEN IMAGES TO OUR BRAINS!

HEY! HOW COME JOHNNY AIN'T WEARIN' ONE'A THESE CRAZY HARNESSES?

DON'T NEED ONE, BEN!

ANY DANGEROUS ANTI-MATTER PARTICLES WOULD FLOW RIGHT THRU ME AS SOON AS I FLAME ON!

KEEP YOURSELF **LIMBER** ...TRY TO **CONTROL** THE DIRECTION OF YOUR DRIFT!

I'M COUNTING ON OUR ORIGINAL **THRUST**...OUR OWN **MOMENTUM**...TO HELP US REACH OUR GOAL!

GOAL? WHAT ABOUT THAT SPINNIN' **VORTEX** THAT ALMOST BLEW US UP LIKE **FIRE-CRACKERS** LAST TIME WE WUZ HERE?

IT'S SMACK-DAB IN THE **CENTER** OF THIS COCKEYED WORLD!

NO MATTER **WHAT** DIRECTION WE PICK... WE CAN'T **MISS** BEIN' PULLED RIGHT **INTO** IT!

THAT'S WHAT I **LIKE** ABOUT YOU, BLUE-EYES...

EVEN WHEN THINGS GET **HOPE-LESS**, YOU ALWAYS LOOK AT THE **CHEER-FUL** SIDE!

WELL, HARDY HAR HAR!

SUDDENLY---

REED! LOOK OUT!!

SOMETHING GRABBING ME---FROM OUT THERE!

IT'S--- CARRYING ME--- AWAY!

JOHNNY--- FLAME ON! GO AFTER 'IM, KID!

WHAT DO YOU THINK I'M DOING??!

THAT'S IT! YER SLOWIN' 'IM DOWN!

HE'S TRYING TO AVOID MY FLAME..!

BUT I CAN'T REALLY ATTACK HIM---WITHOUT HURTING REED!

STAY BACK, JOHNNY! DON'T FIGHT HIM!

IT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO SEE WHAT HE DOES... TO LEARN HIS OBJECTIVE!

THERE MUST BE A MOTIVE BEHIND THIS ATTACK!

SECONDS LATER, THE SILENT, AIRBORNE PREDATOR, STILL HOLDING HIS HUMAN CAPTIVE, GLIDES TO AN EFFORTLESS LANDING---

THIS BARREN-LOOKING PLANET-OID---

HE WAS HEADING FOR IT--- ALL THE TIME!

A CAGE-LIKE DEVICE ---FLYING UP TOWARDS US!

AND A VOICE--- I CANNOT UNDERSTAND!

AHH! MY SCAVENGER HAS BROUGHT ME ANOTHER NEW LIFE FORM!

HE'S **RELEASING** ME--- HURLING ME **TOWARDS** THE APPROACHING DEVICE!

JOHNNY... AND BEN... TOO **FAR AWAY** TO HELP!

IT'S SOME SORT OF **MAGNETIC TRAP**...HOLDING ME!

I CAN'T ...BREAK **FREE!**

IT'S REVERSED DIRECTION... PULLING ME **DOWNWARD** NOW!

WE'RE PLUNGING RIGHT TO THE **CORE** OF THE PLANETOID!

SLACKENING SPEED! MUST BE NEARING THE **END!**

BUT... THE END ...OF **WHAT??**

SECONDS LATER...

I'M **STILL** A PRISONER... BUT **NOW...**

I'M CONFINED WITH... **OTHERS**...THE LIKES OF WHICH CAN ONLY EXIST...IN **NIGHTMARES!!**

THEY'RE REACHING FOR--**MY HARNESS!**

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE NORMAL WORLD...AS WE KNOW IT... *ANOTHER* NIGHTMARE...OF A DIFFERENT SORT... SEEMS TO BE IN THE MAKING ...

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG... *DESPERATELY* WRONG... WITH SUE STORM!

I *KNOW* IT! I CAN *FEEL* IT!

AND THE DOCTORS' GRIM *FACES*...THEIR WORRIED *SILENCE*...IS ALL THE PROOF I *NEED!*

I CAN'T BEAR THE *WAITING!* I HAVE TO LEARN FOR *MYSELF*..!

DOCTOR! I MUST *SEE* YOU! I MUST KNOW WHAT'S *WRONG* ... WITH SUE STORM!

COME *IN!* SHUT THE *DOOR!*

YOU SHOULDN'T *BE* HERE, MISS... BUT, SINCE YOU ARE..!

I SUPPOSE YOU'LL *HAVE* TO FIND OUT *SOME* TIME!

FIND OUT... *WHAT?*

IF ONLY... WE KNEW THE *ANSWER*... TO THAT QUESTION!

SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN SO *HEALTHY*.. SO *UNCOMPLAINING!* WHAT *IS* IT? *TELL* ME!

IT'S SOMETHING IN HER *BLOOD CELLS*... SOMETHING WE DON'T *UNDERSTAND!*

LOOK THRU THE *MICROSCOPE*... AND YOU'LL SEE FOR *YOURSELF!*

I'LL SEE... *WHAT??*

WHY... THERE ARE STRANGE *FLASHES*... FADING... THEN GROWING *BRIGHTER!*

THEY'RE A MANIFESTATION OF *COSMIC IMPULSES*... LIVING *ENERGY*, CAUSED BY THE INCREDIBLE *ACCIDENT* WHICH CREATED THE *FANTASTIC FOUR!*

ENERGY WHICH, IF UN-CONTROLLED, MAY SOON CAUSE THE *DEATH* OF MOTHER... AND CHILD!

BUT, MARVELITES ALL... TAKE HEART! IF THERE *IS* A WAY TO SAVE SUE STORM... YOU CAN BET OUR BOYS'LL *FIND* IT...!

THIS IS THE PLANETOID THEY *LANDED* ON, BEN... I *KNOW* IT!

SO *WHAT?* IT DON'T DO NO *GOOD* UNLESS WE CAN *FIND* 'EM!

AND THEY SURE AS HECK AIN'T *HERE!*

KEEP LOOKING!

I'LL LIGHT UP THE LANDSCAPE WITH SOME CONCENTRATED *FLAME FLARES!*

MAYBE THEY GOT BURIED UNDER SOME'A THESE BLASTED *ROCKS!*

I'LL *FIND* 'IM IF I HAVETA TEAR UP THE WHOLE ROTTEN *PLANET!*

GET A *GRIP* ON YOURSELF, BEN!

IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN *MUSCLES* THIS TIME!

WITH REED *GONE*, IT'S UP TO *US* TO DO THE THINKING!

HEY, JOHNNY ...*CLAM UP*, WILLYA?

I *HEAR* SOME-THIN'!

NOW, WHAT DO WE *KNOW?* (A) HE *LANDED* HERE! (B) WE CAN'T *FIND* HIM!

THEREFORE--

BUT, BEFORE ANOTHER MOVE CAN BE MADE...

SOME KINDA GLASS *GLOBE*... UP FROM THE *GROUND*... CLOSIN' *OVER* US!

IT'S A *TRAP!* WE LET OURSELVES GET *CAUGHT!*

THIS MUST BE... WHAT HAPPENED TO *REED!*

ZZZZZZZZ

AND, EVEN AS THE TORCH'S FATEFUL WORDS ARE UTTERED---

GOOD HUNTING, MY LOYAL SCAVENGER!

YOUR LATEST SPECIMENS ARE BY FAR THE BEST OF ALL!

ALL THREE POSSESS INTELLIGENCE, COMBINED WITH POWER!

IN TRUTH, THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE MOST DANGEROUS THREAT OF ALL!

BUT NOW... THEY ARE ETERNALLY HELPLESS...

AS BEFITS ANY BEING WHO DARES INVADE THE REALM OF ANNIHILUS!

ONLY BY CRUSHING ALL WHO LIVE, CAN I BE CERTAIN THAT NONE WILL EVER THREATEN MY GREATEST TREASURE!

THE TREASURE WHOSE COSMIC POWER HAS EVER GRANTED ME THE PRICELESS GIFT OF... IMMORTALITY!

HERE IN MY HANDS... I HOLD THE MOST PRECIOUS ITEM IN ALL THE WORLD...

MY LIFE-GIVING... LIFE-PROLONGING COSMIC CONTROL ROD!

AND, NOT MAN NOR BEAST SHALL EVER WREST IT FROM ME!

NOW I SHALL EXAMINE MY HELPLESS PRISONERS AT *CLOSER* RANGE!

SINCE ALL WHO *LIVE* ARE THE *ENEMIES* OF ANNIHILUS...

...I MUST KNOW THEIR *STRENGTHS*... THEIR *WEAKNESSES*...

SO THAT I MAY EVER BE ...THEIR *MASTER!*

BACK, YOU MINDLESS, MEANINGLESS, COWERING *PAWNS!*

YOU ARE HARDLY WORTH THE *EFFORT* REQUIRED TO *IMPRISON* YOU!

BUT, THERE IS *ONE* WHO COMES FROM *ANOTHER* WORLD...

WHOSE *POWERS* ARE STILL A *MYSTERY* TO ME!

A MYSTERY WHICH *ANNIHILUS* MUST *SOLVE!*

YOU'LL *FIND* THE ANSWER THAT YOU SEEK---

MUCH *SOONER* THAN YOU BARGAINED FOR!

HE'S USING SOME SORT OF *INSTANTANEOUS TRANSLATOR* DEVICE...

WHICH IS WHY I CAN *UNDER-STAND* HIM!

HIS *OTHER* CAPTIVES---MORE *BEASTS* THAN MEN---

ARE TOO *BEWILDERED*... TOO *TERRIFIED*... TO ACT!

SO IT'S UP TO *ME!*

I DON'T KNOW *WHO* YOU ARE--- OR *WHAT* YOU ARE---

BUT EVEN A *HUNDRED* LIKE YOU WON'T *STOP* ME FROM MY *MISSION!*

MISSION? HOW INTERESTING! I MUST LEARN *MORE!*

HURLED ME *BACK*... WITHOUT MOVING A *MUSCLE!*

WHAT STRANGE POWER CAN *HE* POSSESS?

FOOL! DO YOU THINK A FRAGILE, *FLEXIBLE BODY*...

...CAN OPPOSE THE MEREST BLAST OF MY *COSMIC CONTROL ROD?*

IF HE HAS... A *COSMIC CONTROL DEVICE*... WHOSE ENERGY CAN BE *REGULATED*...

THEN I'VE FOUND WHAT I CAME HERE FOR!

COSMIC CONTROL ROD?!!

HAD I NOT *LOWERED* ITS OUTPUT... YOU'D NOW BE *DEAD!*

IT'S THERE... ON HIS CHEST...

THE ONE ELEMENT THAT CAN SAVE MY WIFE...AND UNBORN CHILD!

NOW I SHALL SHOW YOU THE FOLLY OF ANY FURTHER RESISTANCE!

STAND BACK! IT IS TIME FOR THE OTHERS...

...FOR THEY HAVE OUTLIVED THEIR USEFULNESS!

SO, WITH BUT ONE BLAST, I CONSTRAIN THEM ALL...TO THE NOTHINGNESS FROM WHENCE THEY CAME!

FOR, ONLY IN THE ELIMINATION OF OTHER LIFE, CAN ANNIHILUS FIND HIS IMMORTALITY!

THE CONTROL ROD!! I HAVE TO SEIZE IT... SOMEHOW!

STAND YOUR GROUND.. OR DIE!

HERE, IN THIS *UNIVERSE* OF GALAXIES WITHOUT NUMBER...

IT IS *I* WHO AM THE *POWER*...IT IS *ANNIHILUS* WHO IS THE *MASTER!*

AND NOW, BY MY *DECREE*...YOU SHALL *JOIN* THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT YOU!

SO THAT *ALL* MAY PERISH--- *TOGETHER!*

THE *OTHER* TWO AWAIT YOU EVEN *NOW*...

WITHIN MY VAST *ARENA OF EXECUTION!*

HEY, *LOOK!* IT'S *STRETCHO!!*

SOMEONE TOSSED 'IM *IN* HERE LIKE A BLASTED *BOWLIN' BALL!*

THEN, THAT MEANS... *HE'S* AS MUCH OF A *PRISONER* HERE--- AS *WE* ARE!

START *TALKIN'*, STRINGBEAN! HOW'D WE *GIT* IN THIS MESS? WHO SWIPED OUR *HARNESSES?*

IT'S SOME POWER-MAD *FANATIC* WHO CALLS HIMSELF *ANNIHILUS!!*

BUT, THE *IMPORTANT* THING IS---BY AN INCREDIBLE STROKE OF *LUCK*---HE HAS JUST WHAT WE *CAME* FOR!

THEN TELL US HOW TO *GET* IT ...AND LET'S *GO!*

IT WON'T BE THAT *EASY*, JOHNNY! *HE'S* THE ONE WHO'S IN THE *DRIVER'S SEAT* RIGHT NOW!

OKAY! SO LET'S BOOT HIM *OUT* OF IT!

NO NEGATIVE ZONE *NUT* WITH A CORNBALL *NAME* IS GONNA STOP *US!*

ALAS, GROTESQUE ONE, YOU ARE *CORRECT!*

I HAVE NO *PLAN* TO MERELY *STOP* YOU!

INSTEAD, MY ONLY PURPOSE IS...TO TOTALLY *DESTROY* ALL THREE OF YOU!

AND, IN SO DOING, I SHALL EMPLOY *METHODS* WHICH ENABLE ME TO LEARN THE *TRUE EXTENT* OF YOUR NOW-USELESS *POWERS*

--PURELY FOR MY OWN *AMUSEMENT!*

HE'S *LOOKING* AT US---LIKE WE'RE JUST A BUNCH OF *GUINEA PIGS!*

NEVER MIND *THAT..!*

WE'VE GOT TO GET THE *CYLINDER* HE WEARS ON HIS CHEST!

THEM *SHUTTERS* ARE OPENIN'!

THAT MUST BE THE CREEP WHO CALLS 'IMSELF *ANNIHILUS*... BEHIND ALL THAT TWO-BIT *MAD-SCIENTIST* JUNK!

BEN! JOHNNY! THIS IS WHERE WE MAKE OUR *MOVE!*

WATCH IT!

HE'S THROWING A *SWITCH..!*

I'LL *STRETCH OUT* TO BLOCK HIS LINE OF *SIGHT!*

YOU TWO BATTER DOWN THE *WALL*--- *FAST!*

NO SWEAT, MISTER! IT'LL---

HEY! WHAT'S THE BLAMED THING *MADE* OUTTA?

MY FLAME CAN'T *PENETRATE* IT!

IT'S SOME SORT OF *ANTI-MATTER PLASTIC*--- COMPLETELY *FIREPROOF!*

SO! YOUR WEAPONS ARE *BRUTE STRENGTH*... *FLAME*...AND *ELASTICITY!*

HARDLY *ENOUGH* TO COUNTER THE *ATTACK* WHICH I NOW LAUNCH..!

HEADS UP, BENJY!! LOOK WHAT'S *COMING!*

CLICK!

SKWEEEEEEEE

SOME KINDA GIANT *BOOT!!*

THE BETTER TO *CRUSH* YOU WITH, DOOMED ONE!

BUT I WON'T NEGLECT YOUR *COMRADES*, EITHER...

A *GYRO-SAW*... SLICING *AT* ME FROM A SLOT IN THE WALL!

IF I HADN'T MOVED *QUICKLY* ENOUGH..!!

AND THEN, LESS THAN A FULL SECOND *LATER*...

JOHNNY... LOOK OUT!

IT'S AN ALL-ENGULFING *SONIC SPONGE!*

A THICK, FIRE-EXTINGUISHING *MASS*...

TRYING TO *CATCH* ME... AND *SMOTHER* ME...FLAME AND *ALL!*

WELL, REED NEVER *CLAIMED* THIS WOULD BE A *PICNIC!*

IT'S GAINING ON ME... AND MY FLAME WON'T STOP IT!

THINK, JOHNNY... THINK!

WHAT WOULD REED DO IN A SPOT LIKE THIS??

HE ALWAYS SAID EVERYTHING HAS A WEAK POINT, AND...

HEY! OF COURSE!

IF I CAN "BLIND" ITS SONIC EYE...THAT'LL FINISH IT!

IT'S STILL COMING... TOO LATE TO RUN!

IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE!! MORE FLAME...MORE.. MORE!!

I DID IT!

WITHOUT THE USE OF ITS SONIC CONTROL, IT EVAPORATED INTO CHARRED CINDERS!

BUT I CAN'T STOP NOW...

REED CAN'T DODGE THAT GYRO-SAW MUCH LONGER!

BUT HE WON'T HAVE TO... AFTER THIS!

YOU WERE JUST IN TIME, LAD!

BUT... WHERE'S BEN?

HE MAY NEED US NOW!

THERE HE IS!! THE BOOT STILL HAS HIM PINNED!

HOLD ON, OLD FRIEND! WE'LL GET YOU OUT!

THE HECK YA WILL!

I'M JUST GITTIN' STARTED!

BUT, BEN... IT'S AS BIG AS A HOUSE!!

WHAT'S SIZE GOTTA DO WITH IT?

I WUZ JUST RESTIN' TILL YA GOT HERE!

IT'S NO FUN MAKIN' LIKE A FULL-TIME HERO IF THERE AIN'T NO ONE TA SEE YA!

BUT NOW THAT I GOT ME AN AUDIENCE...

I CAN START MAKIN' WITH THE MUSCLE!

KRUNCH!

LIKE THIS!!

HE'S DOING IT!

HE'S FORCING IT BACK... LIFTING IT OFF!!

NATCHERLY! DIDJA THINK I WAS SOME KINDA PANTY-WAIST OR SOMETHIN'??

C'MON... C'MON... DON'T JUST *STAND* THERE!

GO FIND ME A *WASTEPAPER BASKET* I CAN *DUMP* THIS IN!

GREAT WORK, BEN!

YOU TORE IT *FREE* OF ITS SUPPORTING MECHANISM!

LOOK OUT! IT'S STARTING TO *FALL!*

FALL, MY FOOT!

I'M GONNA *TOSS* IT... RIGHT AT THE CREEP WHO THOUGHT IT WOULD *FLATTEN* ME...

BECAUSE...

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

QUICK! HE MUSTN'T GET AWAY!

I'VE GOT TO HAVE THAT CONTROL ROD!

THERE HE IS!

THE CRASH KNOCKED HIM OUT!

I'VE GOT TO REMOVE IT CAREFULLY... SO AS NOT TO JAR THE COSMIC CIRCUITS!

THERE! IT'S OFF!

THEN WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' FOR?

THE CIRCUITRY WILL HAVE TO BE DECODED... BUT I CAN DO THAT LATER!

RIGHT NOW, OUR MAIN TASK IS TO SAFELY RETURN TO OUR OWN HOME WORLD!

HEY, WOULDN'T THAT MAKE A DANDY KAZOO?!!

REED! BEN! LOOK... OVER THERE!

IT'S A FULLY AUTOMATED RAIL-PLANE!

ANNIHILUS MUST HAVE USED IT FOR SPEEDY SUB-SURFACE TRANSPORTATION!

AND, IF IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM--!

IF YER TRYIN' TO TELL US TO CLIMB ABOARD..

WHY DON'TCHA JUST SAY SO??

LOOKS LIKE THERE'S ONLY *ONE* SEAT!

AND NO *CONTROL PANEL!*

HOW DOES HE MANAGE TO *DRIVE* IT?

I THINK I *KNOW*, JOHNNY!

HOW IN BLAZES CAN YA *THINK* YA KNOW?

EITHER YA *KNOW*... OR YA *DON'T* KNOW!

BUT, IF YOU *THINK* YA KNOW, THEN YOU AIN'T *SURE*...

AND IF Y'AIN'T *SURE*, YER *GUESSIN'!*

AN' IF YER ONLY *GUESSIN'*, THEN HOW CAN YA *KNOW?*

C'MON, BENJY ...*PIPE DOWN!* THIS IS *SERIOUS!*

I SUSPECT THIS *CYLINDER* RESPONDS TO *THOUGHT WAVES*...

WHICH IT *TRANSLATES* INTO RAW *POWER!*

AND IT SEEMS THAT I WAS *RIGHT!*

BUT, BRIEF SECONDS *LATER*...

APPARENTLY I *UNDER-ESTIMATED* THE ALIEN *INVADERS!*

I WAS A FOOL TO *TOY* WITH THEM!

I SHOULD HAVE *DESTROYED* THEM... ON THE *SPOT!*

BUT I WILL *NOT* REPEAT MY ERROR A *SECOND* TIME!

WHAT IS THIS?!!

MY COSMIC CONTROL ROD ---IT IS GONE!!

THEY HAVE STOLEN MY MOST PRICELESS POSSESSION!

WITHOUT IT, IMMORTALITY CAN NEVER BE MINE!

WITHOUT IT... I DIE---LIKE ANY LESSER BEING!

BUT, I SHALL RETRIEVE IT!

NO POWER IN ALL THE UNIVERSE CAN---

MY RAIL PLANE! THAT, TOO, IS GONE!

BUT, THEY HAVE MERELY BOUGHT THEMSELVES A TEMPORARY REPRIEVE---

THERE CAN BE NO ESCAPE FROM THE VENGEANCE OF ANNIHILUS!

I STILL AM THE MASTER HERE! THUS, THEIR FATES ARE SEALED!

FOR THEY HAVE LEFT ME NO CHOICE BUT TO FOREVER TRAP THEM UPON THIS PLANET...

...BY SUMMONING THOSE WHO ONLY LIVE TO TRACK ... AND TO TEAR...

...THE SUPREMELY BESTIAL BORERS!

SKLAKK!

THEN, WITH THE SINGLE THRUST OF A ***MASTER LEVER***, ANNIHILUS SENDS A SUDDEN ***SONIC SHOCK*** REVERBERATING THRU THE TORTURED PLANET...

...A SHOCK WHICH SERVES TO ***AROUSE*** AN UNCONTROLLABLE HORDE OF SAVAGE, SLEEPING ***BORERS***---FEARSOME LIVING ENTITIES, ABLE TO ***CHOMP*** THRU ROCK AND ORE AND METAL LIKE A ***KNIFE*** CAN SLICE THRU BUTTER...

SUCH ARE THE ***BORERS!*** SUCH ARE THE UNSTOPPABLE ENGINES OF ***DESTRUCTION*** WHOM OUR HEROES NOW MUST ***FACE...!***

ATTRACTED BY THE *VIBRATIONS* OF THE SWIFTLY HURTLING *RAIL-PLANE*, THE POUNDING, PLUMMETING, AWE-SOMELY *POWERFUL* CREATURES INSTANTLY *CONVERGE* IN THE PATH OF THE CAREENING CRAFT...!

LOOK! WHAT'S THAT??

WHATEVER THEY ARE... THEY MEAN US *NO GOOD!*

THEY'RE ATTACKING... TEARING THE ENTIRE *PLANE* APART!

NO WAY TO ESCAPE THEM!!

THEY'RE ALL AROUND US!

LET 'EM *COME!* ONCE I GIT MY *MITTS* ON 'EM..!

NO, BEN! ANY-THING THAT CAN *RIP* THIS CAR APART SO EFFORT-LESSLY...MIGHT BE MORE THAN YOU CAN *HANDLE!*

BITE YOUR *TONGUE*, BUDDY!

I CAN HANDLE *ANYTHIN'!*

HERE'S YOUR *CHANCE*, BIG MOUTH!

THEY'RE ALMOST *UPON* US!

AND... LOOK AT THE *SIZE* OF THEM!

HEY! HE'S SHOVIN' ME AROUND LIKE A BLASTED YANCY STREETER!

OKAY, BUG-EYES... NOW THAT YA HAD YER FUN---!

WATCH IT, BEN!

ANOTHER IS COMING!

MMMUM-MMPPHH! NOW YA TELL ME!!

JOHNNY!! USE YOUR FLAME!

WE CAN'T LET BEN MAKE A PERSONAL FIGHT OF THIS!

OKAY, REED! I'LL TRY TO SCARE THEM OFF!

DUCK DOWN, BENJY.. UNDER THE FLAMES!

WADDJA EXPECT ME TA DO--REACH UP FER A HAIR SINGE?

I.. CAN'T BE... EVERYWHERE AT ONCE!

THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM... COMING FROM ALL OVER!

THEY'RE CAUSING THE WHOLE TUNNEL... TO CAVE IN ON US!

I'VE GOT TO INCINERATE THE ROCK... WITH A FAST-HEATING SUB-NOVA BLAST!

BUT... THE MORE I DO IT... THE FASTER MY FLAME WILL... DIE OUT!

IT'S NO USE! WE'RE TOO OUTNUMBERED!

THEY'RE TOO POWERFUL!

BOTH OF YOU... STAND CLOSE TO ME!

S'MATTER? YA WANT WE SHOULD HOLD YER HAND?

NO! IT'S TIME TO TAKE... A DESPERATE GAMBLE..!

THE ONLY THING THAT CAN GET US TO SAFETY... IS THE COSMIC CONTROL!

IF I CAN CONCENTRATE HARD ENOUGH ---TO RELEASE THE FORCES WITHIN--!

FER CRYIN' OUT LOUD.

WHY DIDN'TCHA DO IT RIGHT AWAY?

I DON'T WANT TO DRAIN TOO MUCH OF THE ROD'S ENERGY...

IT HAS TO BE USED TO SAVE SUE... AND THE BABY!

NOW... I HAVE TO THINK... HAVE TO REVERSE THE FLOW OF ENERGY!

THIS IS IT! WE'RE BEING SURROUNDED BY A FLICKERING SHIELD OF PUREST COSMIC FORCE!

IT'S WORKING! WE'RE BEING LEVITATED... RISING TO THE SURFACE!

YA MEAN... ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS THINK??

THAT LETS YOU OUT, HAM-BONE!

THE HARDER I CONCENTRATE, THE FASTER WE MOVE!

IT'S ALMOST TOO EASY!

SOME-THING'S SURE TO HAPPEN!

WITH BIG-HEARTED BENJY ALONG?

NOT A CHANCE!

BUT, APPARENTLY JOHNNY'S CHANCE REMARK IS MORE THAN AN IDLE PREMONITION...

THEY'VE ESCAPED THE BORERS!

IN A MATTER OF SECONDS, THEY'LL BE SAFE IN SPACE!

BUT ANNIHILUS IS NOT WITHOUT DEADLY COUNTER-MEASURES!

MY FLYING GUN-SHIP IS THE MOST POTENT WEAPON OF ALL...

AND ITS SPEED IS UNMATCHED BY ANYTHING THAT LIVES!

THE COSMIC CONTROL ROD MUST BE *MINE* AGAIN---

EVEN IF *HALF A WORLD* MUST BE LAID WASTE IN THE PROCESS!!

FOR, NO MATTER *WHAT* BEFALLS...

ANNIHILUS MUST LIVE!

I KNOW *NOT* FROM WHAT *WORLD* THEY HAVE COME--

BUT, ONCE I DEPRESS THIS *PLUNGER*...THEY ARE BUT *SECONDS* FROM TOTAL *EXTERMINATION!*

AND, SINCE THEY HAVE *FINALLY* COME INTO VIEW...

I PRESS IT *NOW!*

THE DEED IS *DONE!* NOTHING CAN SAVE THEM!

ZASSPT!

SOMETHIN' CLOBBERED US!

THE BLASTED SHIELD DISSOLVED AWAY INTO NOTHIN'!!

WE'RE BEING HELPLESSLY FLUNG THRU SPACE... LIKE A TEAM OF POWERLESS RAG DOLLS!

RAG DOLLS MAYBE..!

BUT POWERLESS... NEVER!!

SUITING ACTION TO HIS WORDS, THE INDOMITABLE MR. FANTASTIC EXTENDS HIS PLIABLE ARM LIKE A SNAKING SAFETY ROPE---

GRAB HOLD... QUICKLY... SO WE WON'T BE SEPARATED!

THAT'S WHY HE SEVERED OUR COSMIC SHIELD---

AND NOW---HE'S ZEROING IN FOR ANOTHER SHOT!

BUT, SO LONG AS THE COSMIC CONTROL ROD IS MINE---

AND, SO LONG AS I CAN CONCENTRATE ON WHAT MUST BE DONE---

ENOUGH WITH THE SPEECHES, STRINGBEAN!!

DO SOMETHIN'!

ZOWEE! HE DID IT, ALL RIGHT!

HE GOT THE GIZMO TO SPEED US UP ENOUGH TO DODGE THAT MISSILE!

YEAH... BUT WHAT'S HE DONE FER US LATELY?

HOLD TIGHT... BOTH OF YOU!

I'M USING THE ROD TO REPEL THE MISSILE!

IT HAS POWER ENOUGH TO REVERSE ITS COURSE!

BUT HOW LONG CAN YOU KEEP DOING IT...

BEFORE ALL ITS ENERGY IS SPENT?

LONG ENOUGH, JOHNNY!

I'VE JUST SENT THE MISSILE BACK...TOWARDS THE VESSEL IT CAME FROM!

BY THE TIME OUR ATTACKER MANAGES TO SAVE HIMSELF... IF HE DOES...I PRAY WE'LL BE GONE!

LET'S CLING TO THESE DRIFTING ROCKS...WHILE WE GET OUR BEARINGS!

HEY! LOOKA THAT!

SCRATCH ONE FER OUR SIDE!

BEN! JOHNNY!

UH OH! NOW WHAT?

THESE ROCKS!! I JUST REMEMBERED...!!

WE'VE BEEN TRAPPED UPON THEM... BEFORE!

YA MEAN...??!

REED'S *RIGHT!* WE'VE DRIFTED INTO THE AREA WHERE *SPACE* IS TRANS-FORMED INTO *ANTI-MATTER!*

OKAY! OKAY! NOW HOW'S ABOUT TRYIN' TA SAY IT IN NICE, PLAIN *ENGLISH*?!!

CAN'T YOU SEE HOW EVERYTHING IS BEING DRAWN *DOWNWARD*, BEN---TO THAT *ANTI-MATTER PLANET* BELOW US?

SOONER OR LATER, ALL THIS SPACE DEBRIS HAS TO *EXPLODE* WHEN IT GETS *CLOSE* ENOUGH!

AND THAT INCLUDES *US*, AS WELL!

NOW I REMEMBER!

IT HAPPENED THE *LAST* TIME YA CAME HERE--- WHEN YA NEARLY DIDN'T MAKE IT *BACK!* *

* AND *WE* NEARLY FORGOT WHICH *ISH* IT WAS, TILL WE LOOKED IN THE *OLD FORBUSH ALMANAC!*---*F.F. #51*, RIGHT?
--- *STARRY-EYED STAN.*

BUT *THIS* TIME YOU'RE NOT *HELPLESS!*

WE HAVE THAT *COSMIC THINGAMAJIG* TO SAVE US!

NO, WE *HAVEN'T*, JOHNNY!

IT WON'T WORK!

ENERGY *ITSELF* IS TOTALLY *NEUTRALIZED* IN THIS AREA!

EVEN MY *FLAME* CAN'T DO US ANY GOOD... *NOW!*

AND THAT CRAW-FISHIN' *CREEP* TOOK BOTH'A OUR *ANTI-MATTER HARNESSES* WHEN HE CAPTURED US BEFORE!

BUT---WE CAN'T JUST *STAND* HERE!

WE'VE GOT TO DO *SOME-THING!*

WE'LL...GET *OUT* OF THIS... *SOMEHOW!*

WE *MUST!* I...CAN'T FAIL HER *NOW*... NOT WHEN IT MEANS... MORE THAN *EVER!*

THE ONE THING WE *WON'T* DO... WE *DARE NOT* DO...IS *PANIC!*

HOW'SABOUT IF WE JUST *CRY* A LITTLE?

PERHAPS...IF WE...REVIEW THE *FACTS..!*

THAT PLANET *BELOW* US... IS COMPOSED OF *NEGATIVE PARTICLES...*

THE EXACT *OPPOSITE* OF THE PARTICLES WHICH MAKE UP *OUR* WORLD!

THERE IS EVERY POSSIBILITY THAT *LIFE* HAS EVOLVED DOWN THERE...

EVEN AS IT DID ON *EARTH!*

FOR, THE MORE WE *LEARN* ABOUT THE SEEMINGLY END-LESS *UNIVERSE...*

THE MORE WE REALIZE THAT IT *ALL* SEEMS TO BE PART OF SOME AWE-SOME, INTRICATE *MASTER PLAN!*

YOU MEAN...HERE IN THE *NEGATIVE ZONE*...THERE MAY ACTUALLY BE A PLANET WHERE MEN ARE COM-POSED OF... *NEGATIVE PARTICLES??!*

I DON'T CARE IF THEY'RE MADE OUTTA SHRIMPS, 'N SNAILS, 'N PUPPY DOGS' TAILS!

I WANT OUT!

SO DO *I*, OLD FRIEND ...MORE THAN YOU *KNOW!*

IT'S EVEN *POSSIBLE* THAT A GREAT *CIVILIZATION* EXISTS DOWN THERE!

WITH A *CULTURE* AND *SCIENTIFIC KNOW-HOW* THAT WOULD PUT OUR *OWN* TO SHAME!

BUT, THERE'S NO WAY IT CAN *SAVE* US!

"FOR, IF EVER ONE OF US DARED MAKE *CONTACT* WITH ANY TYPE OF *NEGATIVE* BEING..."

"THE ENSUING *EXPLOSION* WOULD START AN IMMEDIATE *CHAIN REACTION*, OF SUCH UNIMAGINABLE *MAGNITUDE* THAT IT COULD DESTROY...AN ENTIRE *WORLD!*"

BUT, BEFORE REED RICHARDS CAN CONTINUE WITH HIS STARTLING SUMMATION...

WOK!

IT'S ANNIHILUS!

HE'S STILL ALIVE..STILL AFTER US!

THOUGH MY GUN-SHIP WAS DESTROYED...

ITS DEFENSIVE FORCE FIELD WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO SAVE ME!

AND, SO LONG AS I CONTROL THIS SINGLE ARMORED SECTION...

I SHALL STILL REGAIN MY COSMIC ROD!

UNLIKE YOUR FLAME POWER... WHICH IS USELESS IN THIS ANTI-MATTER AREA...

MY NEGATO GUN IS FULLY OPERATIONAL WITHIN THIS ZONE!

WELL, GOODY FER YOU!

HANG ON, BOTH OF YOU!

ANNIHILUS MAY PROVE A BLESSING IN DISGUISE!

HE'S CLOSE ENOUGH---FOR ME TO MAKE A LASSO OF MY ARM---!

NOW!

I DID IT!

I SNARED HIS GUN!

NO!

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN ANOTHER *WORLD*---A TENSE, CROWDED *PRESS CONFERENCE* IS BEING HELD WITHIN ONE OF NEW YORK'S MOST FAMOUS *HOSPITALS*...

IS THERE ANY *NEWS* ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE *INVISIBLE GIRL*, DOCTOR?

NOT AT THIS TIME!

WE'RE STILL AWAITING WORD FROM THE *DELIVERY ROOM!*

WHAT ABOUT THAT SO-CALLED *ELEMENT-X?*

I'LL ASK OUR *SPECIALIST*, DR. MOLINARI, TO ANSWER THAT--!

DR. MOLINARI, WOULD YOU EXPLAIN THE MATTER OF MRS. RICHARDS' *BLOOD CELLS*, PLEASE?

IT'S QUITE *SIMPLE*, GENTLEMEN--- *FRIGHTENINGLY* SIMPLE!

THERE IS A STRANGE *COSMIC ELEMENT* WITHIN HER BLOOD...

...AN ELEMENT WHICH MIGHT CAUSE THE *DEATH* OF OUR PATIENT--- AS WELL AS HER CHILD!

---UNLESS.. AN *ANTIDOTE* CAN BE FOUND!

WHAT *KIND* OF ANTIDOTE? WHERE CAN YOU *FIND* IT?

OUR *READERS* WANT TO KNOW IF ANYONE IS *SEARCH-ING* FOR IT NOW!

YOU MAY REST ASSURED THE VITAL ELEMENT *IS* BEING SOUGHT---

---BY THE *GREATEST SUPER-TEAM* THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN!

AND, SPEAKING OF THE FABULOUS *F.F.* ---

WITHOUT HIS *GUN*, HE'S POWER-LESS TO *HARM* US!

WHAT'S THE *DIFF?*

WE'RE ALL GONNA BE *KAPUT* IN ANOTHER FEW MINUTES *ANYHOW!*

IF *ONLY* I COULD *FLAME ON!*

BUT... I *CAN'T!! I CAN'T!!*

I--ALWAYS *FIGURED*... WE CAN'T WIN THEM *ALL!*

BUT...TO HAVE TO GO---LIKE *THIS!*

MY *CONTROL ROD!!* I MUST *HAVE* IT! IT'S *VALUELESS* TO YOU! IT CAN'T SAVE YOU *NOW!*

WHY DON'TCHA *TOSS* IT AT 'IM, STRETCH--- JUST TO *SHUT* 'IM UP!

IT CAN'T DO *US* ANY GOOD!

IT *CAN*, OLD FRIEND! JUST *TRUST* ME!

I *TRUST* YA--- I *TRUST* YA!

BUT DOES *THAT* UGLY CREEP HAVETA BE THE *LAST* THING I *LOOK* AT BEFORE WE GO *BOOM?*

HE *WANTS* THIS...HE *NEEDS* IT...MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL THE *WORLD!*

EVERY-THING DEPENDS ON WHETHER IT'S POSSIBLE TO *DRAIN* THE ENERGY, WITHIN!

BUT *SUE* NEEDS IT, TOO!

OF *COURSE* IT'S POSSIBLE!

THERE'S A *NOZZLE* ---AT THE *TIP!*

THEN RETURN OUR *REPELLOR UNITS* TO US...AND YOU CAN *HAVE* YOUR CYLINDER!

HE WON'T *DO* IT, REED! WE CAN *SAVE OURSELVES* IF HE DOES!

STRETCH OUT'N *GRAB* 'IM, MISTER!

IF WE GOTTA *GO*---LET'S TAKE 'IM *WITH* US!

NO! HE'LL TRADE THE *REPELLOR UNITS* FOR IT...I *KNOW* HE WILL!

BUT, IF YOU *GIVE UP* THE CYLINDER--- WHAT ABOUT *SUE??*

JUST *WATCH*, JOHNNY!

SINCE THE ANTI-MATTER ENERGY CAN BE *DRAINED*...

AND, SINCE I WAS CARRYING A SMALL, EMPTY *VIAL* IN MY BELT...

WE *STILL* HAVE A CHANCE TO *MAKE IT!*

ONLY *SECONDS* LEFT, ANNIHILUS!

THIS *CYLINDER* FOR OUR *REPELLOR UNITS!* WHAT'S YOUR *ANSWER?*

YES! *YES! ANYTHING! ANYTHING!*

THERE! THERE THEY *ARE!*

NOW *HURRY! HURRY!*

REED WAS *RIGHT!* HE *DID* IT!

DON'T TALK! PUT THEM *ON*... *FAST!* EVERY SECOND *COUNTS!*

COME TO *POPPA*, SWEETIE!

WE'RE ALMOST... AT THE POINT OF... *NO RETURN!*

WHAT ABOUT *ANNIHILUS?* YOU WON'T *REALLY* RETURN HIS CYLINDER, WILL YOU?

I GAVE MY *WORD*, JOHNNY!

BUT... HE TRIED TO *KILL* US!

PERHAPS! BUT HE CONSIDERED US *MENACES!*

REMEMBER... *WE'RE* THE ALIENS HERE!

I *KEPT* MY BARGAIN!

NOW *YOU* MUST KEEP *YOURS!*

WE WILL!

I'LL *THROW* THIS TO YOU AS SOON AS WE'RE IN THE *CLEAR!*

REED! WE MAY NOT *MAKE* IT!

THE *BOULDERS* ARE STARTING TO *BLAZE*... AND *CRUMBLE!*

JUST A FEW MORE *SECONDS*... WHILE THE UNITS BUILD UP THEIR *RESISTANCE* TO THE ANTI-MATTER PARTICLES!

ALL RIGHT! NOW... GET READY...

DON'T WORRY, JUNIOR! *I* GOTCHA!

GO!

THE HARNESSES *WORK!* WE'RE FLYING *BACK!*

THEY'RE *REPELLING* THE ANTI-MATTER... AS THEY WERE *DESIGNED* TO DO!

BUT WHAT ABOUT *ANNIHILUS?*

WILL *HE* KEEP FALLING DOWNWARD ...TO HIS *DEATH?*

NO! HIS BODY CHEMISTRY... AND HIS *WINGS*... WILL ALLOW HIM TO *RESIST* THE ANTI-MATTER *PULL!*

AND NOW... TO INSURE THAT HE DOESN'T *ATTACK* US AGAIN...

I'LL HURL THE CYLINDER *BEHIND* HIM...

I SURE HOPE WE NEVER RUN INTO *HIM* AGAIN!

IT'S NOT LIKELY THAT WE *WILL,* JOHNNY!

WHEN WE REACH *HOME,* I'LL TRY TO *SEAL OFF* THE ENTRANCE TO THE NEGATIVE ZONE... *FOREVER!*

EITHER *THAT*... OR SELL *TICKETS!*

LOOK! WE'RE FREE OF THE ANTI-MATTER AREA!

I CAN FLAME ON AGAIN!

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

I WUZ GETTIN' A CHARLIE HOSS!

DON'T STOP FOR ANYTHING!

WE'VE GOT TO REACH SUE ... BEFORE THE BABY ARRIVES!

WE'RE HITTING THE *DISTORTION AREA* AGAIN!

IT MEANS WE'RE ON THE *LAST LAP!*

JUST *SHUT YOUR EYES*-- AND KEEP *GOING!*

THE WORST IS *OVER* NOW!

THE HECK IT *IS*...

YER STILL *TALKIN'!*

WE'RE THRU!

A SHORT TIME LATER... IN A METROPOLITAN *WAITING ROOM*...

WHAT AM I SO *NERVOUS* ABOUT?

SO WHAT IF IT *IS* MY FIRST BABY?

I GOTTA STAY *COOL... CALM!*

CAN'T LET MY-SELF BECOME A *NUNDLE OF BERVES!*

HEY... ANY OF YOU GUYS GOT A *MATCH?*

NO...

BUT MAYBE *THIS'LL* DO!

I *KNEW* IT! I *FLIPPED* OUT! *I'M GONE!*

NO! WAIT A MINUTE! I RECOGNIZE YOU NOW!
YOU'RE THE HUMAN TORCH ---AND HE'S THE THING!
YOU'RE THE INVISIBLE GIRL'S BROTHER!
SOMEONE MUST'A TOLDJA!
HAS THERE--- BEEN ANY WORD?
NO--- NOT YET!
HER HUSBAND..IS IN THE DELIVERY ROOM WITH HER NOW!
WE'VE BEEN SITTING--- AND WAITING---BUT NOBODY'S TOLD US ANYTHING YET!
KNOCK IT OFF, KID! REED BROUGHT HER THAT COSMIC JAZZ, DIDN'T HE?
I HOPE--- IT DOESN'T MEAN---
SHE'LL BE OKAY! SHE'S GOTTA BE OKAY!
HEY! HERE HE IS!
HOW IS SHE, PAL? ARE YA--- A BIG DADDY YET?
REED! SAY SOMETHING!! WHY... DO YOU LOOK...SO GRIM?
SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN...TO WORRY YOU! I WAS JUST--- LOST IN THOUGHT!
THE BABY IS DUE ANY MINUTE NOW!
THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO!
I'VE NEVER FELT SO HELPLESS BEFORE!
HELPLESS? LOOK, BIG BRAIN...THERE'S SOME THINGS YA GOTTA LET THE LITTLE LADY DO ALONE!
WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN--- AND SIS KNOWS WE'RE ROOTING FOR HER!

THEN, AS THE LONG, TENSE MOMENTS DRAG ENDLESSLY ON...

I'VE GOT TO LOOK *CALM!*

DON'T WANT POOR *REED* TO THINK I'M *WORRIED!*

MUSTN'T SHOW HOW *CONCERNED* I AM!

NO NEED TO ALARM THE *OTHERS!*

HEY, PAL... HOWZABOUT SETTLIN' *DOWN* FOR A WHILE?

YA BEEN WALKIN' IN *CIRCLES* SO MUCH THAT IT'S MAKIN' ME *DIZZY!*

RRR!IP!

WHY DON'TCHA KEEP *COOL*... LIKE *ME?* LOOK HOW RELAXED *I* AM!

I *AM* RELAXED! I *AM* RELAXED!

I'M NOT *WORRIED!* I'M NOT *WORRIED!* I'M *RELAXED!* I'M *RELAXED!*

ATTENTION, GENTLEMEN!

THE *NURSE!* THIS IS *IT!*

WH--WHO DO YOU... WANT TO *SEE?*

MISTER *SMITH?*

I'M RELAXED! I'M RELAXED!

SMITH! THAT'S *YOU!*

YOU JUST HAD *TWINS!*

MR. SMITH!! WAKE UP!

I'M GLAD HE WUZ *RELAXED!*

CAN YA IMAGINE IF HE WUZ THE *NERVOUS* TYPE?

WHAT IF... WE BROUGHT HER THE ANTI-MATTER ELEMENT... *TOO LATE?*

CUT IT OUT, STRETCH!

THAT KINDA TALK AIN'T GONNA DO *NOBODY* ANY GOOD!

LET'S LOOK AT THE *BRIGHT* SIDE...

MEBBE IT'S JUST *TAKIN'* SO LONG 'CAUSE SHE'S HAVIN' *TRIPLETS* OR EVEN... *MORE!*

ANYWAY, *BAD NEWS* TRAVELS FAST... AND WE AIN'T *HEARD* NOTHIN' YET!

HEY!! DIDN'T I JUST HEAR A *BABY* CRYIN'??

MR. RICHARDS... YOU'RE A FATHER!

IT'S A BOY!

MOTHER AND CHILD ARE BOTH DOING FINE!

HE'S AN ABSOLUTE DARLING!

THAT MEANS... I--I'M AN--- UNCLE!!

SUE IS ALL RIGHT!

--AND ---I HAVE ---A SON!

LIKE MY DEAR OL' AUNT PETUNIA WOULD SAY ---WELL, WADDAYA KNOW?!!

AND NOW... THE PRESS WOULD LIKE SOME PICTURES!

SECONDS LATER, THE ENTIRE HOSPITAL CORRIDOR SEEMS ALIVE WITH CAMERAMEN, REPORTERS AND EXUBERANT WELL-WISHERS, AS A SENSE OF GRATEFUL RELIEF SEEMS TO PERMEATE THE VERY AIR ABOUT THEM ---

OUR MISSION WAS A SUCCESS!!

MY SISTER'S OKAY!

OH, JOHNNY... I'M SO HAPPY FOR HER...AND FOR ALL OF US!

DOCTOR... I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW I APPRECIATE ALL YOU'VE DONE!

THEN DON'T BOTHER! YOU'VE STILL GOT A WIFE AND BABY TO VISIT!

WADDA WE WAITIN' FOR? LET'S GO SEE THE LITTLE GUY!

IT'S THE ROOM AT THE *END* THE CORRIDOR!

I'D *FIND* IT IF IT WAS AT THE END OF THE *WORLD!*

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE--MY *NEPHEW!*

CREEAK!

SUE--?

COME *IN,* DARLING...

COME IN AND MEET...

YOUR NEW *SON!*

ISN'T HE *BEAUTIFUL,* REED?

HE'D *HAVE* TO BE... WITH *YOU* FOR HIS MOTHER!

I'M--SO *THANKFUL* ---SO *HAPPY*---I CAN HARDLY *SPEAK!*

HE SEEMS SO *HELPLESS*---SO *TINY*--- IN A WORLD THAT'S SO *GIGANTIC*---SO FILLED WITH UNKNOWN *DANGERS!*

HE'S NOT GONNA HAVETA WORRY ABOUT *DANGER,* PAL---NOT WITH *US* AROUND!

WE'LL NEVER *STOP* TRYING TO MAKE THIS NUTTY WORLD OF OURS A *BETTER* PLACE---

SO THAT *HE*... AND ALL THE *OTHER* LITTLE CHILDREN *EVERYWHERE*...CAN GROW UP IN *PEACE*.. AND *BROTHER-HOOD!*

TO WHICH *WE* SAY...

AMEN!

THE BEGINNING!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four™

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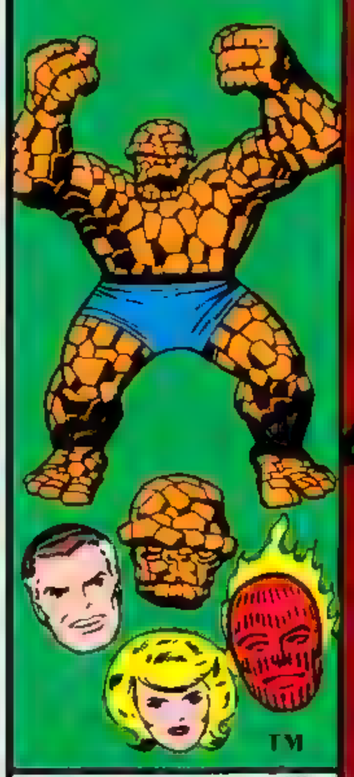
ENTER--THE EXQUISITE ELEMENTAL!



MARVEL™ COMICS GROUP

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FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, THE F.F. NEED A REPLACEMENT!

"ENTER--THE EXQUISITE ELEMENTAL!"

CRYS! WHERE'D YOU GET THE NEW FF COSTUME?

I MADE IT MYSELF, JOHNNY!

YOU DON'T WANT ME TO FEEL LIKE AN OUTSIDER!

SINCE YOUR SISTER SUE HAS A BRAND-NEW BABY TO TAKE CARE OF--

SOMEONE HAS TO TAKE HER PLACE ON YOUR TEAM!

SHEESH! IT'S LIKE A BLASTED SUPERHERO LOVE-IN!

PROFOUNDLY PRODUCED BY:
STAN (THE MAN) LEE and JACK (KING) KIRBY

EMBELLISHED BY:
JOE SINNOTT

LETTERED BY:
ARTIE SIMEK

PROTESTED BY:
YANCY STREET ASSEMBLED

BUT, IT'S NOT THAT *EASY*, HONEY! YOU CAN'T JUST *DECIDE* YOU'LL BECOME AN *FF* MEMBER!

I'VE *LIVED* WITH DANGER ALL MY *LIFE*, JOHNNY!

BESIDES, THINK OF THE *DANGER*, CRYS!

IT'S FAR *BETTER* --THAN TRYING TO LIVE--WITHOUT *YOU!*

YECHH! DO I *HAVETA* LISTEN TO THAT ON A *EMPTY* STOMACH?

ADMIT IT, MR. STORM--YOU *KNOW* I'M THE PERFECT *REPLACEMENT* FOR SUE RICHARDS!

YOU'D BE PERFECT FOR *ANYTHING*, LOVELY LADY!

BUT YOU *STILL* CAN'T JOIN THE *FF* AS EASY AS ALL *THAT!*

FIRST, YOU'VE GOT TO *PROVE* YOURSELF! AND THEN--

AWW, WHY WASTE TIME *TALKING--?*

PROVE MYSELF, MUST I?

HAVE YOU *FORGOTTEN* I'M A NATURAL-BORN *ELEMENTAL?!!*

HEY! CUT IT *OUT!* *DON'T--!*

HAVE YOU *FORGOTTEN* HOW I CAN HARNESS *NATURAL FORCES*--HOW I CAN *CONTROL* THEM--AND BEND THEM TO MY *WILL?*

OKAY! WE REMEMBER! WE *REMEMBER!*

CRYSTAL! HOLD IT! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE?

WE KNOW YOU'VE GOT A TEMPER! BUT IT TAKES MORE THAN THAT TO QUALIFY YOU!

THE IMPORTANT THING IS TAKING ORDERS --KEEPING YOURSELF UNDER STRICT CONTROL!

I HAPPEN TO BE WELL AWARE OF THAT, JOHNNY STORM!

AND I'LL PROVE I CAN CONTROL MY POWERS AS WELL AS ANY OF YOU!

ALL I NEED DO IS CONCENTRATE IN ORDER TO FILTER ALL MY ELEMENTAL ENERGY THRU ONE ARM--

AND, BY AIMING MY FINGERS-- I CAN DIRECT THE NATURAL FORCE JUST WHERE I WANT IT!

CAREFUL! YOU'RE POINTING TOWARDS THE DOOR!

WHY DIDN'TCHA FALL FER A GO-GO DANCER, INSTEAD?

SPZK

WHAT'S THAT?!!

OH! MR. RICHARDS!

I'M SO SORRY! --I WAS JUST DISPLAYING MY ELEMENTAL POWERS!

THEY'RE MUCH TOO DANGEROUS TO USE CARELESSLY, CRYSTAL!

THAT WAS ONE OF THE FIRST LESSONS JOHNNY HAD TO LEARN-- CONCERNING HIS FLAME!

I JUST LEFT THE *HOSPITAL*-- WHERE SUE AND THE BABY ARE DOING *FINE!*

SHE WANTED ME TO GIVE ALL OF YOU HER *LOVE!*

BUT, I JUST NOTICED --THAT *COSTUME* YOU'RE WEARING--

TELL ME I CAN *KEEP* IT!

TELL ME I CAN BE YOUR WIFE'S *REPLACE-MENT*--

I *KNOW* YOU NEED ME --AND I KNOW I CAN *DO* IT!

A *REPLACEMENT* FOR SUE--I HADN'T EVEN *THOUGHT* OF THAT!

BUT--YOU'RE JUST A *CHILD*, CRYSTAL-- AND THE JOB IS ONE OF THE MOST *DANGEROUS* ON EARTH!

I'M NO YOUNGER THAN SUE *HERSELF* WAS--WHEN YOUR TEAM WAS FIRST *FORMED!*

AND, I'VE POSSESSED *MY* POWER ALL MY *LIFE!* I WON'T HAVE TO LEARN FROM *SCRATCH!*

I'LL HAVE TO *THINK* ABOUT IT!

IT'S NOT A DECISION TO BE MADE *LIGHTLY!*

BUT, THE BRILLIANT *MR. FANTASTIC* MAY NOT HAVE AS MUCH "*THINKING TIME*" AS HE EXPECTS! FOR, AT THAT VERY MOMENT-- IN THE SOUNDPROOF HIDEOUT OF--THE *WIZARD*--

THERE! I HAVE FINALLY ENERGIZED MY NEWEST, AND MOST *POWERFUL* PAIR OF ALL-PURPOSE *WONDER GLOVES!*

WHEREAS MY *ORIGINAL* PAIR MADE ME THE *EQUAL* OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR-- *THESE* WILL DO STILL *MORE--!*

HAVING THE *COMBINED POWERS* OF THE ENTIRE *FANTASTIC FOUR*--

THESE WILL ENABLE ME TO *TOTALLY DEFEAT THEM--NOW--* AND *FOREVER!!*

--BY HURLING THEIR *OWN* POWERS-- *MAGNIFIED* MANY TIMES-- *AGAINST* THEM!

BUT, *THIS* TIME I WILL *NOT* ATTACK THEM ON THEIR *OWN* HOME GROUNDS--

THIS TIME, THE BATTLEFIELD SHALL BE ONE OF MY *OWN* CHOOSING!

BY SIMPLY ACTIVATING MY *ANTI-GRAVITY* DISCS, THERE IS *NO* PLACE BEYOND MY REACH!

BUT FIRST, I MUST *TEST* MY NEWLY-DESIGNED *WONDER GLOVES*--

--BECAUSE, WHEN BATTLING THE *FANTASTIC FOUR*--EVEN *ONE* TRIFLING ERROR CAN MEAN--*DISASTER!*

AND THE *WIZARD* SHALL NOT ERR *AGAIN!!*

HAH! EVEN THE POWER OF THE BLUDGEONING *THING* MUST PALE BESIDES MY *OWN!*

IMPACT

NEXT TO *ME*, THE *HUMAN TORCH* IS NO MORE THAN A BUMBLING *AMATEUR!*

AS FOR *RICHARDS* HIMSELF--HOW CAN *HIS* INTELLECT MATCH THE BRAIN WHICH COULD *CREATE* MY ALL-POWERFUL *WONDER GLOVES!*

AND, I NEED NOT BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE *INVISIBLE GIRL*--SINCE SHE HAS *FORSAKEN* HER MISSION--IN THE NAME OF *MOTHERHOOD!*

THEREFORE, NOTHING REMAINS TO BE DONE--EXCEPT *STRIKE!*

AND STRIKE I *SHALL!*

REED!! ELECTRO-WAVES--DESTROYING THE OLD WONDER GLOVES WE CAPTURED FROM THE WIZARD!

HE THREATENED TO ATTACK ANEW--WITH A DEADLIER PAIR--AND HE'S DOING IT!

HOW MANY TIMES ARE WE GONNA HAVETA LICK THAT CREEP?

DON'T PANIC!!

IT'S JUST HIS WAY OF MAKING SURE WE CAN'T USE HIS EARLIER GLOVES AGAINST HIM!

THE GLOVES--ARE GONE!

IT WAS A CHALLENGE--LIKE THROWING A GAUNTLET!

HE EXPECTS US TO GO AFTER HIM!

HEY, JUNIOR! WAIT UP FER US!

AND LET HIM GET AWAY? FORGET IT!!

FLAME ON!

JOHNNY--WAIT! YOU'RE PLAYING RIGHT INTO HIS HANDS!

MAYBE SO! BUT THEY'LL BE PRETTY SCORCHED WHEN I'M ALL THRU WITH THEM!

THERE HE IS--BELOW ME! --NOT EVEN TRYING TO HIDE!

BUT HE'LL SOON WISH HE HAD!

ONLY A *FOOL* WOULD BLAST AN OLD, ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, WIZARD!

A FOOL *PERHAPS!*

OR, A *BRILLIANT FOE* SEEKING TO ATTRACT YOUR *ATTENTION!*

--SO THAT I COULD *TRAP* YOU INTO *ATTACKING* ME--

AND THEN *REVERSE* DIRECTION--PROVING HOW MUCH *FASTER* I AM!

YOU--FASTER THAN THE *HUMAN TORCH?!!*

THAT'LL BE THE DAY, BULB-HEAD!

ALL I NEED DO IS TOSS A FAST-FORMING *FLAMING WALL* AHEAD OF YOU, AND--

I *TOLD* YOU! MY *SPEED* CAN PROPEL ME PAST *ANYTHING* YOU CAN COME UP WITH!

HEY!

HE CHANGED COURSE AND ZOOMED *ABOVE* IT IN A *SPLIT SECOND!*

BUT, DON'T EXPECT THE *WIZARD* TO REMAIN ON THE *DEFENSIVE* FOR LONG--!

NOT WHEN MY *WONDER GLOVES* CAN FAR EXCEED THE POWER OF THE *THING!*

HE'S REACHING FOR THAT *STEEPLE!*

AND NOW, YOU FLAMING FREAK-- IT'S MY TURN!!

SKRAK

AT LAST THE HUMAN TORCH HAS MET HIS MASTER!

COMING AT ME-- LIKE A MISSILE!

HAVE TO MELT IT WITH ONE BULLS-EYE FLAME BLAST--!

WON'T HAVE TIME FOR A SECOND CHANCE!

GOT IT!

AND NOW, YOU CRUMMY-- HUH??

I DON'T GET IT! HE WAS HERE A SECOND AGO!

BUT NOW-- HE'S NOWHERE IN SIGHT!

WAIT! WHAT'S THAT-- COMING AROUND THE CORNER--??!

LOOK, STRETCHO-- THERE HE IS!

IZZAT ALL THE KID HAS TO DO--FLY AROUND SMOKIN' UP THE JOINT?

JOHNNY WOULD NEVER WASTE TIME IN IDLE FLIGHT! HE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY SEARCHING FOR THE ELUSIVE WIZARD!

LOOK, KID-- YA GOTTA LEARN TO IGNORE THE NUTTY THINGS I SAY--LIKE EVERYONE ELSE DOES!

HECK! I'M THAT HOTHEAD'S BIGGEST FAN!

THE FAULT IS MINE, MR. GRIMM! I SHOULD NOT ALLOW MY EMOTIONS TO INTERFERE WITH THE TASK AT HAND!

HEADS UP! THE TORCH IS SIGNAL-LING!

HE'S TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING!

HANG ON! I'M SHOVING THE FANTASTI-CAR GEARS INTO MAXIMUM MANEUVERABILITY POSITION!--BE SURE YOU'RE ALL BUCKLED UP!

REED! YOU WERE RIGHT! IT'S THE WIZARD!

HE'S GOT A NEW PAIR OF WONDER GLOVES!

HE'S MORE DANGEROUS THAN EVER!

OKAY! OKAY! WE GIT THE MESSAGE!

YER BEGINNIN' TO SOUND LIKE A WELL-DONE WALTER CRONKITE!

ALAS! THE THIN-SKINNED TEEN-AGER SHALL BE "WELL DONE"-- NO LONGER!

IT'S HIM!

HE DOUSED JOHNNY'S FLAME! THE LAD'S FALLING!

I'M--SOAKING WET! CAN'T STAY-- AFLAME!

HOW-- DID THE WIZARD --DO IT??

HOLD HER STEADY, BEN!

I'LL GET HIM!

RICHARDS SAVED THE TORCH--BUT IT SCARCELY MATTERS!

THEY'VE OBSERVED MY POWER--SEEING HOW I FORCED A JET OF WATER FROM THIS TANK WITH MY GLOVES' PRESSURE RAY!

AND THAT'S THE WAY I WANT IT!

FOR, NOW-- WHILE THEY TREMBLE IN FEAR--

I'LL DESTROY THE WHOLE LOT OF THEM!

HAVING ADAPTED MY *ANTI-GRAVITY* DISCS TO MINIATURIZED *RAY* FORM--

HOW COMPARATIVELY *SIMPLE* IT IS TO HURL THE *ENTIRE* WATER TANK AT THEM--

--WHILE CAUSING IT TO ATTAIN THE *SPEED* AND *THRUST* OF A DESTRUCTIVE *MISSILE!*

MR. RICHARDS! THAT HUGE FLYING OBJECT IS RAPIDLY *OVERTAKING* US!

I SUGGEST YOU IMMEDIATELY *CHANGE COURSE*-- AND HEAD FOR THE *RIVER!*

THE *RIVER!!* WHAT GOOD'S *THAT* GONNA DO, LADY?

CRYSTAL IS *RIGHT,* BEN!

IT'S THE VERY THING I WAS *THINKING* OF!

DON'T YOU *SEE?* IT ALL DEPENDS ON *YOU!*

WELL, YOU JUST GO ON *THINKIN',* MISTER!

ME--I'M GONNA *WHUMP* THAT OVERGROWN LOLLI-POP INTA THE MIDDLE O' NEXT *WEEK!*

FACE FRONT, KIDDIES-- HERE IT *COMES*--!!

SPTANNGT

PERFECT! WE'RE AT THE RIVER'S EXACT CENTER--

--SO THE TANK WILL FALL HARMLESSLY INTO THE WATER BELOW!

YA MEAN--YOU FIGGERED IT WOULD HAPPEN LIKE THAT-- JUST A COUPLE'A SECONDS AGO?!!

OF COURSE, MR. GRIMM! IT SEEMED SO OBVIOUS!

THE LITTLE LADY IS AN EXCELLENT STRATEGIST, BEN!

BUT NOW WE'D BETTER LEAVE THE FANTASTI-CAR, AND PREPARE FOR BATTLE!

THEY'RE LANDING!!

I'VE GOT TO STRIKE BEFORE THEY CAN SEPARATE!

WITH LUCK, I MIGHT DEFEAT THEM ALL AT ONCE!

KOOK!

SEPARATE-- AND TAKE COVER!

WE'RE SITTING DUCKS IF WE STAY TOGETHER!

JOHNNY! FLAME ON!

CRYSTAL DOESN'T NEED YOUR HELP!

MOVE, BOY!

HE'S RIGHT, JOHNNY! DON'T LET ME STOP YOU FROM---OHHH!!

CRYS!

IF YOU'LL PARDON THE CLICHE-- I FINALLY HAVE YOU WHERE I WANT YOU!

OH YEAH?

JOHNNY! DON'T FLAME ON!

THIS IS MY ONE CHANCE-- TO PROVE MYSELF!

WATCH HOW I CAN NEUTRALIZE HIS ANTI-GRAVITY UNIT--

BY CONCENTRATING ON MY OWN ELEMENTAL FORCE!

THERE! BY HARNESSING THE ENERGY OF THE WIND ITSELF, I'VE PUT HIM OUT OF CONTROL!

BUT, HOW LONG CAN YOU KEEP IT UP??

LONG ENOUGH-- WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

I NEVER SUSPECTED-- THAT SUCH A FRAIL-LOOKING GIRL--COULD POSSESS--SUCH POWER!

BUT, NOW THAT I'VE BEEN ALERTED--

THE WIZARD SHALL KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH HER!

FIRST, I'LL LAUNCH A SHATTERING SERIES OF SHOCK WAVES-- AS ONLY MY WONDER GLOVE CAN!

THE FOOLS SHOULD HAVE HEEDED RICHARDS' COMMAND TO SEPARATE!

BUT NOW-- IT'S TOO LATE!

BOOM HOOM

HE'S ATTACKING AGAIN!

BRACE YOURSELVES!

ONLY ONE THING CAN SAVE US FROM THE SHOCK WAVES--

BOOMBABOOMBA

AN ELEMENTAL COUNTER-SHOCK--

FORCEFUL ENOUGH TO DRIVE THEM BACK!

FEAR

ARHHHH!

IF NOT FOR THE PROTECTIVE POWER OF MY GLOVES--

I'D-- NOW BE-- AT THEIR MERCY!

HOW-- CAN ONE MERE FEMALE-- DO THIS-- TO ME??

BUT, THIS TIME--SHE HAS TRULY GONE TOO FAR!

FOR THIS TIME --I'LL SET MY GLOVE CONTROLS --TO HIGHEST INTENSITY!

NOW YOU WILL LEARN THE FATAL FOLLY OF TAMPERING WITH FORCES BEYOND YOUR YOUTHFUL KEN--!

YOU CANNOT THREATEN ME!!

YOU CANNOT THREATEN ONE WHO IS THE SISTER OF MEDUSA--

ONE WHO HAS DWELLED AMONG THE INCOMPARABLE INHUMANS--

AND FACED PERILS WITHOUT NUMBER AT THE SIDE OF MIGHTY BLACK BOLT!

BUT MOST OF ALL--YOU CANNOT THREATEN-- A BORN ELEMENTAL!

EVEN SO *SIMPLE* A SUBSTANCE AS SWIRLING *SMOKE*-- FROM THE *LIGHTNING* I CREATED--CAN MAKE YOU *GASP*--

--AND *PREVENT* YOU FROM USING YOUR PAIR OF DEADLY *GLOVES!*

THE POWER *STILL* IS MINE!

BUT, I WAS NOT *PREPARED* --FOR THE ONSLAUGHT OF--AN *ELEMENTAL!*

I MUST GET OUT OF *RANGE!* I NEED MORE *TIME*--TIME TO THINK--TO MAKE NEW *PLANS!*

JOHNNY! HE'S GETTING *AWAY!*

NOT IF *I* CAN HELP IT!

AND I CAN HELP IT!

THE OL' *FLAMIN'* LASSO TRICK, HUH?

OKAY, WIZ-- HOLD IT WHERE YOU *ARE!*

SHEESH! MY LITTLE BUDDY'S A REGULAR *FLAMIN'* JOHN WAYNE!

OKAY, BEN-- IT'S UP TO *YOU* NOW!

YOU KNOW WHAT TO *DO*, OLD FRIEND!

SURE! SURE! JUST STOP *YAKKIN'* LONG ENUFF TO LET ME TAKE A *BEAD* ON 'IM!

GIVE HIM ONE FOR *ME*, BIG BUDDY!

GOOD SHOT! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH YOU'RE RIGHT ON *TARGET!*

NUTS! THIS WUZ ALMOST *TOO EASY* FER A HOTSHOT LIKE *ME!*

FOK!

HIS *HELMET* SAVED HIM FROM SERIOUS *INJURY*--AS WE *KNEW* IT WOULD--

BUT I SUSPECT HE'LL BE SOME-WHAT LESS *BELLIGERENT* AFTER THIS!

HEY-- *LOOK!* THE CRUMB-BUM HIT THE *DRINK!*

STAND CLEAR! I'LL SEE IF I CAN *REACH* HIM!

I'M IN *LUCK!* THE WATER *REVIVED* ME--JUST IN *TIME!*

AND MY *GLOVES* WILL WHISK ME TO *SAFETY*--

--BEFORE THEY KNOW WHAT *HAPPENED!*

THERE'S NO *SIGN* OF HIM DOWN THERE!

I DON'T *GET* IT!

HIS BLASTED *HELMET* WOULD'A KEPT 'IM FROM *DROWNIN'!*

HE *DIDN'T* DROWN! HE MANAGED TO *ESCAPE!*

AND I FEAR THAT MEANS--WE HAVEN'T HEARD THE *LAST* OF HIM!

MR. RICHARDS, NOW THAT THE DANGER IS *PAST*--I WANT TO *APOLOGIZE* FOR WEARING THIS COSTUME WITHOUT *PERMISSION!*

YES, YOUNG LADY--I BELIEVE AN APOLOGY *IS* IN ORDER--

--FROM *ME*-- FOR EVER EVEN *DOUBTING* YOU!

AND NOW, BY THE *AUTHORITY* VESTED IN ME--BY NOBODY IN PARTICULAR--

I MOST WARMLY *WELCOME* YOU TO THE ROLLICKING RANKS OF THE FABULOUS FREE-WHEELING *FANTASTIC FOUR!*

MAN! FROM NOW ON, THE *SUPER-HERO* BIZ IS GONNA BE A *BLAST!*

IF ANYONE MESSES WITH *US*, SHE'LL WHUMP 'EM WITH A *POWDER PUFF!*

--AND YOU BETTER *BELIEVE* IT!

The Fantastic Four #72, page 2 pencils
by Jack Kirby

BEN SAYS GALACTUS SENT PUNISHER WE BEAT HIM-- NOW MEBBE HE'LL LAY OFF

GALACTUS TOSSED THE *PUNISHER* AT US 'N WE *CLOBBERED* 'IM!*

THAT OVERSIZED SPACE ZOMBIE CAN'T SCARE *ME!*

YOU'RE WHISTLING IN THE *DARK*, BENJAMIN!

GALACTUS DOESN'T CARE ABOUT *US!* WE'RE VIRTUALLY BENEATH HIS *NOTICE!*

AND HE'S CAPABLE OF DESTROYING AN ENTIRE *WORLD* IN ORDER TO *GET* HIM!

SO WHAT'RE WE *WORRIED* ABOUT?

IT'S THE *SILVER SURFER* HE'S *AFTER!*

ANY *MORE* BRIGHT QUESTIONS, BENJY BOY?

*IT HAPPENED RIGHT *HERE*, IN *FF#74*! I *SEE* WHY IT BREAKS OUR HEARTS WHEN YOU MISS ANNISH P.--SYMPATHETIC STAN.

I DON'T LIKE WAITING

NUTS! I DON'T CARE *WHAT* YA SAY!

I'M SICK 'N *TIRED* 'A WAITIN' AROUND FOR SOMETHIN' TO *HAPPEN!*

THROOM!

COOL IT, BIG BUDDY!

NO SENSE WASTING YOUR STRENGTH ON *TREE TRUNKS--*

WHEN WE *STILL* DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE *IN* FOR!

THIS IS UNOFFICIAL

AND TRY THINKING OF SOMEONE *ELSE* FOR A CHANGE!

REMEMBER, *SUE* IS STILL IN THE CITY--ALONE WITH CRYSTAL!

DO YOU THINK I *LIKE* BEING AWAY FROM HER-- AT A TIME LIKE *THIS?*

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT! I *GIT* YER POINT!

SO LONG AS THE *SILVER SURFER* REMAINS HIDDEN, *GALACTUS* WILL-- *LOOK!*

I *KNEW* HE WOULDN'T GIVE UP! HE'S STILL *SEARCHING*-- WITH A *SPACE RAY!*

REED! WHAT IF HE-- *FINDS* HIM?

2

WE CAN'T TAKE CHANCE BEIN-- SUE'S IN CITY

AHH - MEBBE GALACTUS JUST GOT SICK OF US AND TOOK OFF

NO -- HIS RAY IS STILL PROBING FOR WHEREABOUTS OF SURFER -- WHEREVER HE'S HIDING

The Fantastic Four #75, page 3 pencils
by Jack Kirby

COME DOWN AND HAVE IT OUT, YOU COSMIC CLOWN

I DON'T CARE WHAT *ANYONE* SAYS, YA HEAR?

I AINT SCARED OF A *DOZEN* GALACTUSES!

IF I EVER GIT MY *MITTS* ON 'IM, I'LL *CLOBBER* THE BUM!

COME *OFF* IT, BEN!

WE'RE NOT DEALING WITH THE *USUAL* SUPER-POWERED MENACE--

NOW WE FOLLOW RAY ACROSS COUNTLESS GALAXIES

YOU'RE TRYING TO CHALLENGE A BEING WHO CAN ANNIHILATE WHOLE *PLANETS!*

AT THIS VERY *INSTANT*, HE COULD BE HOVERING ANYWHERE IN THE *COSMOS* TRYING TO DECIDE OUR *FATE!*

--A LIVING ENTITY TO WHOM *GALAXIES* ARE NO MORE THAN *STEPPING STONES!*

AND, EVEN AS *REED RICHARDS* SPEAKS, A MIGHTY SPACECRAFT ORBITS NEAR A LONG-DEAD STAR--

WHERE MIGHTY SHIP OF GALACTUS HOVERS NEAR DEAD STAR

AS, WITHIN THE INFINITY-SPANNING CELESTIAL CRUISER, THE EMOTIONLESS VOICE OF *GALACTUS* COLDLY MURMERS--

ENOUGH! LET THE PROBE-RAY *CEASE!*

MY HERALD-WHO-WAS HAS FOUND A MOST EFFECTIVE PLACE OF *CONCEALMENT!*

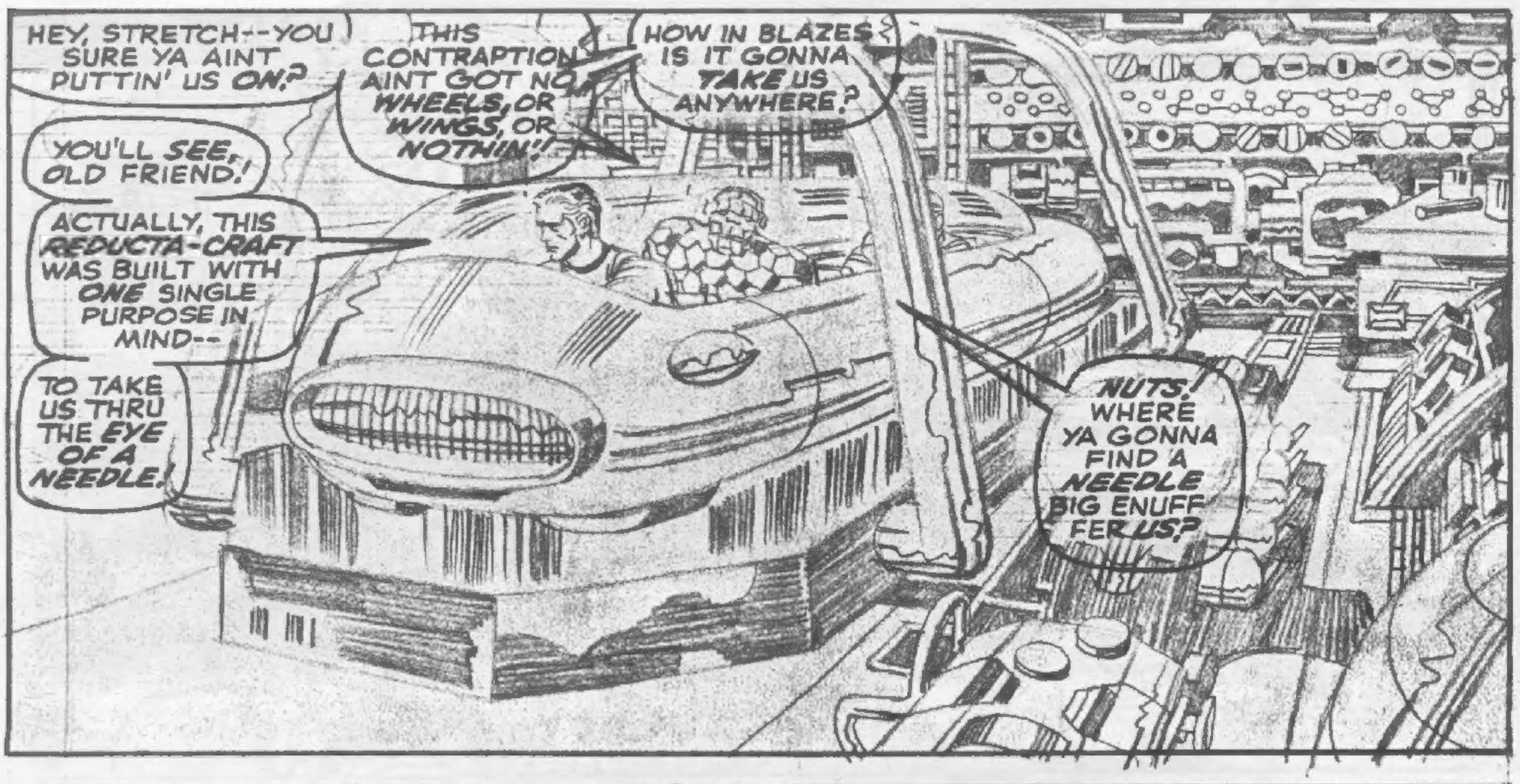
GLICK

3

GALACTUS SHUTS OFF RAY -- SURFER IS ON EARTH BUT HAS SOMEHOW FOUND EFFECTIVE COVER

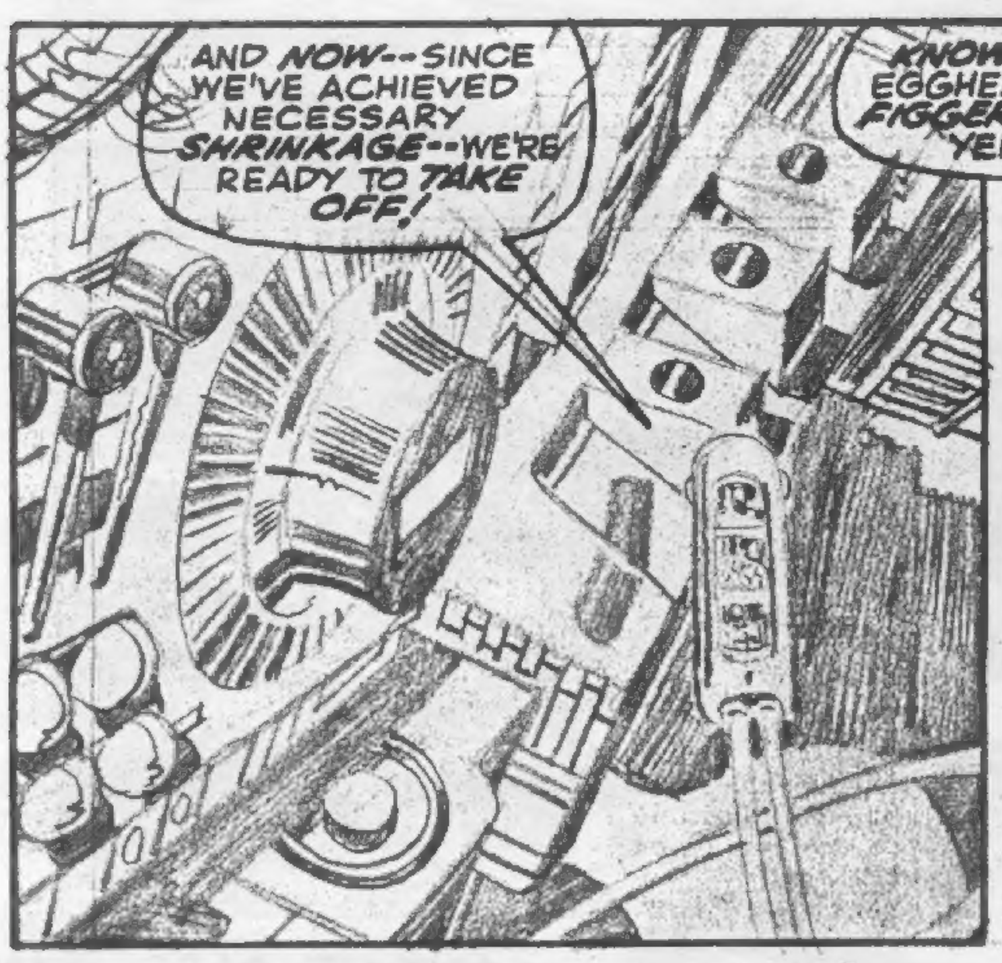
The Fantastic Four #76, page 2 pencils
by Jack Kirby

BEN SAYS THIS CONTRAPTION DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT CAN GO ANYWHERE--


HEY, STRETCH--YOU SURE YA AIN'T PUTTIN' US ON?
THIS CONTRAPTION AIN'T GOT NO WHEELS, OR WINGS, OR NOTHIN'!
HOW IN BLAZES IS IT GONNA TAKE US ANYWHERE?
YOU'LL SEE, OLD FRIEND!
ACTUALLY, THIS REDUCTA-CRAFT WAS BUILT WITH ONE SINGLE PURPOSE IN MIND--
TO TAKE US THRU THE EYE OF A NEEDLE!
NUTS! WHERE YA GONNA FIND A NEEDLE BIG ENUFF FER US?

ANYWHERE--ONCE THE REDUCING CYCLE IS PUT INTO MOTION--LIKE NOW!
HEY! WHAT'S COMIN' OFF?
HANG ON! WE'RE UNDER WAY!
I FEEL LIKE-- I'M SQUEEZIN' UP--INSIDE'A MYSELF!
SHOOM

THAT'S AS GOOD A DESCRIPTION AS ANY, BEN!
--EXCEPT THE ENTIRE REDUCTA-CRAFT IS SQUEEZING DOWN WITH US!
WHY DON'T YOU TWO STOP TALKING AND ENJOY IT?
IT'S GOT RIDING A ROLLER COASTER BEAT ALL HOLLOW!


AND NOW--SINCE WE'VE ACHIEVED NECESSARY SHRINKAGE--WE'RE READY TO TAKE OFF!
KNOW SOMETHIN' EGGHEAD? I ALWAYS FIGGERED YA'D POP YER CORK!
BUT DID IT HAVETA BE WITH US ALONG?

QUIET, BEN!
I'VE GOT TO CONCENTRATE NOW! THE NEXT PHASE OF SHRINKAGE IS EVEN MORE CRITICAL!
NEXT PHASE?
HOW SMALL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET, REED?
SMALL ENOUGH TO ENTER--
THE MICRO-WORLD!
2

ROOM IS NOW A GIANT WORLD OF IMMENSE INSTRUMENTS AS SHIP TAKES OFF

BEN SAYS I'M TINGLING REED SAYS WE'RE GROWING EVEN SMALLER RAPIDLY

The Fantastic Four #72, page 3 pencils
by Jack Kirby

MEANWHILE SUE WITH DOCTOR--HE SAYS SHE'S IN GOOD CONDITION--TIME FOR BABY IS NEAR
MEANWHILE, AT THE EAST SIDE HOTEL SUITE WHERE SUE RICHARDS AWAITS THE ARRIVAL OF HER FIRST BABY--
YOUR CONDITION IS PERFECTLY FINE, YOUNG LADY!
JUST GET PLENTY OF REST--AND CALL IF YOU NEED ME!
ALTHOUGH I MUST ADMIT ONE THING--
I'M SURPRISED AT YOUR HUSBAND--NOT BEING HERE WHEN THE TIME IS SO NEAR!
BUT DONIT WORRY LITTLE LADY-- TAKE NO NOTICE OF THE FUSS YOU HEAR ON THE NEWSCAST
HE WILL BE HERE--I KNOW IT!
I HOPE SO, MY DEAR!
AT ANY RATE, TRY NOT TO LET THOSE TERRIBLE NEWS STORIES UPSET YOU!
HE'S PROBABLY SPEEDING TO MY SIDE RIGHT NOW!
NEWS STORIES--??
CRYSTAL-- WHAT DID HE MEAN?
YOU HAVEN'T SHOWN ME A PAPER--OR PLAYED THE RADIO--IN DAYS!
WHAT ARE YOU KEEPING FROM ME?
HOW CAN I TELL HER--ABOUT THAT PLANETOID--WHICH APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE AND ALMOST DESTROYED THE EARTH?
SHE'LL SUSPECT THAT IT MUST SOMEHOW CONCERN THE FANTASTIC FOUR!
AND I PROMISED REED--AND JOHNNY--THAT I'D DO WHAT-EVER I COULD TO KEEP HER FROM WORRYING!
IT'S NOTHING, SUE! HE MUST HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO THE USUAL WAR NEWS FROM OVERSEAS!
YOU CAN'T DECEIVE ME, DEAR! I KNOW YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING!
PLEASE, SUE-- PLEASE DON'T ASK ME!
IN ANY EVENT, THERE'S NOTHING YOU--OR I--OR ANYONE CAN DO NOW!
I KNEW IT! THE BOYS ARE IN TROUBLE--JUST WHEN I'M POWER-LESS TO HELP!
IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN--NOW--WITH THE BABY ABOUT TO BE BORN--
NO! DON'T SAY IT! YOU MUSTN'T EVEN THINK IT!
THEY'LL BE ALL RIGHT--THEY HAVE TO BE!
3
IT'S TROUBLE ISN'T IT-- IT INVOLVES THE BOYS--AND IT'S BAD--HOW BAD?
NOW DON'T TAKE ON, SUE
JUST WHEN THE BABY'S COMING-- I MUST PRAY FOR ALL OF US

The Fantastic Four #76, page 4 pencils
by Jack Kirby

FF HEAD FOR MICROSCOPE SLIDE -- WHERE SURFER VANISHED

THEY SHRINK INTO CHEMICAL STAIN ON SLIDE

AND, WELL MAY WE HOPE-- FOR *EVERYONE'S* SAKE-- THAT CRYSTAL'S IMPASSIONED WORDS--ARE *TRUE!*

JUST TELL ME *ONE* THING, STRETCHO--

WHAT'S MAKIN' THIS NUTTY SHIP *FLY?*

IT'S PROPELLED BY THE SPEED OF ITS OWN *SHRINKAGE,* BEN--

JUST AS A *BALLOON* MOVES QUICKLY WHEN THE *AIR* IS EXPELLED!

OH WELL, ASK A DOPEY *QUESTION,* AND--*HEY!* GIT US *OUTTA* HERE!

WE'RE SHRINKIN' RIGHT INTO THE BLOB OF *CHEMICAL STAIN* THAT WUZ ON THAT MICRO-SCOPE SLIDE!

I *KNOW* IT! THAT'S THE WHOLE *IDEA!*

THIS IS THE ONLY COURSE THE *SURFER* COULD HAVE TAKEN-- AND WE'VE GOT TO *FOLLOW* HIM!

THE *OBJECTS* YOU SEE SPEEDING *PAST* US ARE AN ENDLESS STREAM OF *MOLECULES!*

AT OUR PRESENT RATE OF SPEED, WE'RE ABOUT TO BECOME --THE WORLD'S FIRST HUMAN *MICRONAUTS!*

THE *SILVER SURFER* TOOK THIS ROUTE AFTER READING YOUR *NOTES,* REED!

BUT, WHAT MADE YOU EVER *WORK* ON SUCH AN EXPERIMENT IN THE *FIRST* PLACE? WHAT WERE YOU *AFTER?*

THINK *BACK,* JOHNNY! CAN'T YOU *GUESS?*

-:*SHEESH!*:- ARE WE SUPPOSEDTA PLAY *20 QUESTIONS* AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

HOW'S ABOUT GIVIN' A *STRAIGHT ANSWER--* JUST FER *ONCE?*

4

THEN WHAMMA INTO MICROVERSE OF MOLECULES- THEY BECOME FIRST MICRONAUTS—

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
Fantastic Four
WHAT PROFITETH A MAN TO FLEE HIS FATE? FOR HE SHALL SURELY FIND...
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